

CITY OF HALIFAX.

J. J. S. Pam. Box F5

THE

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

AND

GENERAL REVIEW OF AFFAIRS
OF THE CITY GOVERNMENT.

1885.



HALIFAX, N. S.:

WM. MACNAB, PRINTER, 12 PRINCE STREET,

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6594 - July 18/21

THE MAYOR'S ADDRESS.

To the members of the City Council:

GENTLEMEN,—

IN fulfilment of the promise, when occupying the Mayor's chair on the first day of the current civic year, to make a general statement of the affairs of the Corporation, in connection with the annual reports of the various departments and committees, I would now apply myself to the duty. Though the members of the present City Council, and those who have served as mayors and aldermen in the past, may be fully cognizant of the various details of civic policy, the great body of the citizens, to whom the annual corporation reports are always interesting, are not so familiar with the inner history and workings of the several departments, nor of the amount of labor involved in keeping the complex machinery in motion, and making it do its work, in ensuring the comfort, convenience and protection of the citizens.

We may consider this occasion as a new starting-point, and, in consequence will, to some extent, review the past, contrast it with the present, and, on the changed aspect of the present, will build hopes for the future. I trust no remark I may make will be construed into a reflection on our predecessors, who have for so many years conducted the affairs of this corporation with fidelity and ability. To our view, the laws under which they worked were defective, but these defects did not reveal themselves so unmistakably until within recent years, when under the strain of adverse circumstances, all that was imperfect, weak and unworkable became so apparent that a total change in some of the laws governing the city was rendered inevitable.

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Over eight years have elapsed since Mayor Richey—our present esteemed Lieutenant-Governor—submitted to the City Council the last formal address on the affairs of the City of Halifax. That comprehensive document dealt extensively with the many evils then afflicting the body corporate,—evils under which several successive councils had been embarrassed in endeavouring to carry on the business of the corporation.

A glance at the position of affairs existing at the time, as portrayed by the mayor's address and the reports of the Auditor, will enable those who are now charged with the duty of conducting the affairs of the city to compare 1875-6 with 1885-6, just to show the effects of the then much-needed and now happily-effected improved legislation.

The first incongruity pointed out by Mayor Richey was the election of a mayor and six aldermen in October, "in the middle of a financial year which began in May," "a period for which the estimates have been framed, the assessment levied, the money is supposed to have been collected, and the greater part of it available for some important services, whether collected or not, pretty sure to have been expended.

"If, then, the members of the Council, who enter it fresh from the body of citizens, come charged with the performance of any special work, or the Council finds itself pressed upon by the exigencies of some particular department, it is driven to what has been the inevitable resort of the past, and will continue to be under the present condition—the resort of all future Councils, anticipation of what is called the next year's estimates—that is to say, we must either fold our hands in quiescence, and leave work undone for seven months of our term, or we must go on with needed work, incurring the risk and odium of a perpetual overdraw." Another disadvantage of our present procedure is found in the fact that the time of preparing the estimate is usually

"that at which a revision of our pecuniary obligations
"and any modification of our arrangement with officials is
"likely to be most naturally weighed, and made the subject
"of action by the City Council. But inasmuch as the official
"year terminates in October, arrangements proposed in May
"cannot be carried into effect until then; and when October
"arrives, it is more than likely that the new Council will
"refuse to be guided by what was done in May.

"But the anomalies of our system would not be wholly
"removed. The impossibility of making a complete state-
"ment at the end of either your civic or financial year, would
"still remain."

The mayor then entered into a severe arraignment of the system of assessment—taking exception to the *time* of collection, the *subject* and the *mode*. The assessment of tenant instead of landlord was condemned, and the various anomalies of rating personality pointed out. Other important questions—such as the loss in collection, involving an ever-increasing floating debt, culminating in a funded debt; the need of "sinking funds" to eventually decrease the funded debt, with a commission to manage the same; the keeping of proper books of account; concurrence of time in making up accounts, and in the rendering of reports by the various departments, were pressed upon the attention of the Council.

In the annual report of the same year (1876-77), a statement prepared by special auditors—Messrs. Wm. Taylor and W. H. Hart—showed a floating debt or unfunded liability of \$109,914, with nominal assets of doubtful value partially offsetting this large deficiency.—A statement of unpaid water rates for six years (1871 to 1877), showed \$56,676 outstanding—most of which remains uncollected to this day.

Year after year the City Auditor pointed out to successive councils that the position was becoming alarming, the floating debt was growing larger and larger, smaller proportions of the

several years assessments were being collected ; and had it not been that the monies collected for the School Commissioners, for poor and county rates, also sinking fund monies, loans to pay off maturing debentures, sewerage and other special funds were used for current expenditures, the City Treasurer would have been obliged to stop payment in 1879 and 1880.

Under date of 9th Dec., 1878, the Auditor reports : " The point to which I wish respectfully to ask the attention of your Worship and the City Council is that provision must be made somehow or another for this great annual deficiency, arising from bad debts ;" again, " there is no escaping from the fact that the City is going behind hand at the rate of five or six thousand dollars every year, and that if the downward progress be not arrested it will be necessary in a very short time to negotiate a new loan for deficiencies." " I think it would be hardly possible, under our present system of assessment, to realize from our annual estimates more than has been realized in the past."

In 1880 the Auditor reports : " It does seem an anomalous state of affairs that the water department with so ample a revenue should be financially in a condition of chronic embarrassment."

" I regret to be obliged to call the attention of your Worship and the Council to the necessity of making some provision, by funding or otherwise, for a deficiency arising from uncollected rates," and so forth.

On account of other matters pressing upon the time and attention of the members of the City Council, such as the general elections of 1878, the Dominion and Provincial Exhibitions of 1878 and 1879, no efforts were made to secure improved legislation. A special commission of aldermen and citizens was formed to frame an improved scheme of assessment, but it made no progress and was eventually dissolved without accomplishing the desired end.

A report of the Committee of Public Accounts made in December, 1880, showed a floating or unfunded debt of \$202,555, with an assumed offset of \$107,875 of unpaid taxes, of which only one half was eventually realised, so that the net uncovered deficiency of that date was in round figures actually \$150,000 on City account, and \$36,000 on water account, a total of \$186,000. These figures do not by any means show the amount lost in uncollected taxes, as large allowances were annually made and added to the rates of the tax-paying citizens. Each year the per centage of losses was growing larger, the increasing depression in business and the decreased value of real estate and the lowering of rents made the collection of taxes more difficult, and it became apparent to all who could appreciate the gravity of the situation that the only way to save the city from bankruptcy was a radical change in the law of assessment and collection of taxes.

It is not necessary to go over the occurrences of the dark days in civic financial affairs, from 1878 to 1883. Let the dead past bury its dead !

In 1881 the City Council took up the whole question of finance and administration, and after three years of earnest discussion, the so-called Assessment Act of 1883 was placed on the statute book. By this act and co-operating acts the defects, faults and weaknesses of the whole civic code and its administration were attacked, and a complete revolution effected.

While absolute perfection cannot be claimed for the new legislation, and while some of its provisions have not yet been fully tested, it is patent to any honest mind that a vast improvement has been wrought in all that pertains to civic financial affairs and general city business.

Space would fail to enumerate all the changes and improvements sought to be effected by the so-called "new assessment law," or "lien law," but the following are its main features :

- Section 5.—Permanent Board of Assessors.
 8.—Registration of real estate.
 9.—City estimates to be completed 31st December.
 11.—Owners of real estate to be assessed instead of tenants.
 12.—Assessment based on actual value of real estate.
 13.—Lien on real estate for city taxes.
 16.—Modifications on assessment of personality.
 22.—Abolition of cumbrous and uncertain insurance statements, and substitution of fixed licenses.
 28.—Validating clause.
 41.—{ Court of Appeals from assessment—free from
 49.—{ interference of City Council.
 50.—Appointment of a city collector of rates and taxes.
 54.—Provision for poll tax.
 65.—Taxes due on 31st May, instead of 30th September.
 78.—Daily payment of taxes by Collector to Treasurer; audit and monthly statements.
 79.—Improvement in auditing receipts and returns.
 80.—Monthly statement from Treasurer to City Council.
 81.—Daily banking of monies, countersigning of cheques by mayor.
 82.—Weekly payments to School Board and County.
 83.—Improvement in collection of water rates.
 86.—Valuations to be made in autumn.
 87.—Income and expenditure of each year to be kept separate. Separate bank accounts. Payments only to be made based on estimates.
 88.—General, civic, financial and departmental year beginning 1st May and ending 30th April.
 89.—Civic officials elected beginning of year.
 90.—Mayor and aldermen elected end of April.
 113.—Candidates to be certified as having paid all taxes.
 115.—Poll-tax payers have votes.

Although the foregoing are the main features of improvement, almost every clause made changes in either principle or detail, or operated in the smoothing down of inequalities in working. Minor defects there may be, but these will in due time be noted, and avoided by future legislation; in the interim the new law is obtaining a fair trial, and despite some unavoidable friction, it is found to work well. As its provisions are better known and understood, opposition becomes weaker. As its results are ascertained and acknowledged prejudices and misgivings are forced by the inexorable logic of events to yield to conviction of the improved condition of affairs generally.

No proposal has yet been made to repeal the law, nor even to amend any of its principles, so that we may feel assured that the act is working to the satisfaction of the vast body of the people who appreciate all that is just, fair, equitable and sound in civic legislation.

Realisation on real estate in default for city taxes under the act has yet to be operated, but it is hoped that excepting in cases of derelict properties no recourse will be had to this extreme measure.

Having said this much by way of introduction I would refer in detail to the several civic departments.

FINANCIAL.

In civic financial affairs nothing can be more direct than the accountability of the members of the City Council to the tax paying and voting citizens for the amount of the yearly levy for municipal expenditure. An addition of one dollar to the bill of the average ratepayer is seen and felt more directly than twenty dollars added to customs' duties on articles of merchandise consumed by the same person. The mayor and aldermen are held to a strict account for any increase in the

assessment, even when the cause of the increase is utterly beyond their influence or interference. An increased estimate from the Board of School Commissioners, the Board of Public Charities, the County of Halifax, or a liability caused by an act of Parliament, and which may have been passed without notice to the City Council, and perhaps even protested against by that body, involves a five or ten per cent. addition to the taxes of the citizens. The citizen called on to pay this higher rate does not blame those who are responsible for it, but the onus falls on the mayor and aldermen. The members of the City Council may be at their wits end to provide the ways and means to carry on the needful services of the corporation, services which are demanded by the citizens themselves, and they may be devising schemes by which they can retrench without injury to the interests of the public, and yet the dollar they save may be, and frequently is, grasped by a body to whom they are allied, and to whom they have to supply funds, but who has no direct responsibility to the citizens of Halifax. Or as has been the case in the past while the yearly rate and amount of taxation increased, the net amount available for the payment of the needful services decreased—as an example of this latter contingency in 1878-'79, the gross assessment was \$233,079, the net assessment \$227,579, the difference being only \$5,500 allowed for interest and short collection, while in 1882-'83 the gross assessment was \$244,522, the net \$204,485, the difference being \$40,067, the balance being interest, sinking funds, extra allowances for non-collection of taxes, etc. That is, services which expended \$227,579 in 1878-'79 only had \$204,485 to expend in 1882-'83.

Complaints are made of the increased taxation of the past four or five years; for instance:

In 1881-'82 the gross assessment was	\$ 244,532
1885-'86 " " "	268,919
Increase.....	\$ 24,387

Let us examine the cause of this, taking the comparative tables of estimates for those years, to which for information add that of 1875-'76.

	1875-'76	1881-'82.	1885-'86.	Decrease.	Increase.
Salaries	\$ 21,306	\$ 18,950	\$ 23,074	.....	\$ 4,124
Police	24,823	21,976	22,576	.....	600
Fire Department	7,932	7,300	9,685	.....	2,385
do, extras			3,550	.....	3,550
City Prison	8,918	6,400	4,900	1,500	.....
Streets, etc.	27,133	25,000	28,800	.....	3,800
City Property	4,016	3,000	5,970	.....	2,970
Interest, etc	33,184	48,084	42,886	5,198	.....
Allowance	4,000	21,849	12,806	9,043	.....
Lighting Streets	9,933	9,000	9,784	.....	784
County	19,784	17,570	23,979	.....	6,409
Poor Asylum, Hospital.	10,608	14,000	22,000	.....	8,000
School Board	65,139	64,820	67,700	.....	2,880
Industrial School, etc...	900	780	1,940	.....	1,160
Sanitary.....		400	300	100	.....
Park, Garden, Library..	3,100	4,200	4,200	.....	.....
Exhibition.....		3,000	.....	3,000	.....
Gas, Fuel, Printing.....	3,408	1,800	1,800	.....	.....
Contingent, etc.....	3,838	4,103	3,901	202	.....
	\$ 248,022	\$ 272,232	\$ 289,851	\$ 19,043	\$36,662
Income.....	23,400	27,700	20,932		
	\$ 224,622	\$ 244,532	\$ 268,919		

The salary and allowances of the collector of taxes, accounts for the \$4000 increase in salaries; \$600 additional for police is for the protection of the suburbs, formerly without any police supervision; fire department increase, \$2,385, is for horses, now owned by the city and which do street work as well as fire haulage; \$3,550 is partly for hose, etc., to replace apparatus lost and injured at fires; Streets and internal health, \$3,800, is mainly for cleaning and sanitary purposes; indispensable repairs to Exhibition building and engine-houses take the increase of \$2,970. Increase of \$784 lighting streets, is principally for oil lamps in suburbs; and \$1,160 for Industrial School, Dalhousie College, Blind and Deaf and Dumb scholars was placed upon the estimates by the Legislature. Not one dollar of the foregoing could have been avoided; where the increase was not to satisfy demands of the citizens or to save public property, it was the result of unsought Legislative assessments. But these increases can be offsetted by decreases in the shape of savings of \$1,500 in City Prison

\$ 244,532
268,919
\$ 24,387

expenditure, \$5,198 interest and \$9,043 less allowance for short payment of rates (results of Act. of 1883) and \$302 in sundries, a total of \$16,043, so that the net increase for city services proper is only \$3,330, or leaving out the special for fire department, which belongs to 1883, the increased assessment for city purposes is about offsetted by savings.

But during those four years the amount required by the Board of Commissioners of Public Schools has increased from \$64,820 to \$67,700, or \$2,880. In the same period the County of Halifax estimates have risen from \$17,570 to \$23,979, or \$6,409, and the Board of Public Charities from \$14,000 to \$22,000, or \$8,000 increase. These three "allied services" over which the City Council has practically no control, call on the city taxpayers for \$17,289 more than they demanded in 1881-'82, or a sum nearly equal to the total increase of city expenditure over that year and three-fourths of the whole increase of assessment during the past four years. Decrease of income in rents of city property, fines and licenses, and the Dry Dock forfeit of \$2,000, make up the lessened income of \$6,800; so that if the City Income had not fallen off and the School Board, Charity Board and County made no increased demand, the assessment of 1885-'86 would have been the same as that for 1881-'82, viz., \$244,000, and the rate of taxation would not have exceeded $1\frac{1}{8}$ p. c.

Repeating the figures for the two periods, they stand thus:—

Increase in expenditure of city services..	\$ 19373 00
Decrease	19048 00
Net increase.....	\$ 330 00
Add School Commissioners' increase.....	\$ 2880 00
County of Halifax increase.....	6409 00
Board of Charities.....	8000 00
	<u>\$ 17289 00</u>
Gross increase	\$ 17619 00
Decrease of income	6768 00
	<u>\$ 24387 00</u>
Assessment of 1885-6—rate \$1.23.....	\$ 268919 00
“ 1881-2— “ 1.51.	244532 00
	<u>\$ 24387 00</u>
Deducting unavoidable extras from Assessment of 1885-6, the rate would have been \$1.12.	

These figures should effectually dispose of the charges of extravagance made by some citizens against the present City Council. If it is possible to dispense with any of the services in the table of estimates, or even to reduce them, it ought to be done, but an examination of the items in connection with the services themselves will reveal the possibilities. Most of the salaries are fixed by law, and can only be changed by Act of the Legislature. A scaling of ten per cent. was tried for a few years, on such as could be reduced, but after a trial the amounts had to be restored, as the officials could not live on the reduced salaries, and the public interests were suffering. No reduction is possible in police expenditure,—there are not enough men now on the force to do their work thoroughly, and as most of them are married with families dependent on them, their present pay is barely enough to keep them above want. Citizens—and especially underwriters, who now contribute largely to the civic revenue—will not be satisfied with any attempts at decrease in the fire department; on the contrary, its increased effectiveness is demanded. Some humane persons complain of the rigid economy, in food and clothing, practiced at the City Prison, the cost of which last year was less than half the cost during 1879–80, and a large decrease on more recent years. Street expenditure is now under the amount required by law. Internal health service cannot be lessened except at great risk to the comfort and health of the community, and any threatened outbreak of an epidemic would involve a large outlay of money as a precautionary measure. City property must be kept in order; the Exhibition building and Engine houses are actually suffering for needed repairs, and the City building is not habitable for want of a thorough overhauling. Few citizens will agree in the assertion that too many gas and oil lamps are lighted, or that they are lighted too many nights in the month. A few thousand dollars might be saved by closing the Park, the Public Gardens and the City Library, or by shutting down on the Dispensary and the Infants' Home; but unless these can

be lopped off or the "allied services" will reduce their demands, any decrease in the city annual estimates is an unsolved problem. Twelve years ago the Legislature gave the City Council power to assess \$100,000 for general city purposes, viz.: Salaries, Police, Fire Department, Lighting Streets, City Prison, Water, other than from water works, Repairs of City Property, Making and Repairs of Streets, Street Cleaning, Sanitary, Gas, Fuel, Stationery, Interest on Sundry Loans, &c., &c. Since then, several new expenditures have been fastened on the city by the Legislature and made to deplete the \$100,000.

Not one dollar over the \$100,000 can be levied upon the citizens or collected from them except by special act of Parliament, but our "allied services" can call on the City Council for what they require, the only formality to be gone through with is in the case of the School Board which obtains the order of the Governor in Council for any amount over \$60,000. While our \$100,000 allowed by law for city purposes in the last ten years has practically sunk to \$85,000, the \$95,000 of the Schools and Charity Boards and County of Halifax has risen to \$113,000.

In 1876 the City Auditor reported thus to the Council; "what may be called the ordinary expenses of the city are borne by the smaller portions of this assessment, the portion which is limited by law to \$100,000, and already this amount is barely sufficient to bear the numerous charges upon it, one of which is interest on old loans. If, therefore, the various expenditures under the heading of Salaries, Police, Fire Department, City Prison, Gas and Oil Lamps, and so forth, are to be kept up to their present standard, and all overdraws and losses included in the assessment for \$100,000, it is plain that very little can be expected each year for the repairing and cleaning of streets."

It is apparent, therefore, that as the \$100,000 was barely

sufficient ten years ago to carry on imperative services, that now, with a larger population, increased area, greater wants, more pressing responsibilities, we cannot further reduce the amount without involving far greater loss than any small saving which could be made would offset, and as the special assessments for Schools, County, Charities, Interest, &c., imposed by acts of the Legislature, cannot be reduced by the City Council except to the extent of \$4,700 for Park, Gardens and Library, the seeming difficulties in the way of a reduction in civic expenditures can be readily seen. Any appreciable decrease can come only from the School Board, Charity Board and County Council. If the Fire Department requires new hose, or a steam fire engine needs extensive repairs, these must be provided and some other city service forced to submit to a corresponding reduction. The small amount voted for contingent account, depleted by the annual donations to the Dispensary and Infants' Home, is not enough to provide decently for the smaller services dependent on the appropriation for their support. Such grants as were formerly given for celebration of our natal day, aid to special charities, entertainments to distinguished visitors, &c., are things of the past and are not now considered. We are pursuing the most rigid economy even to the verge of parsimony.

The most the citizens can expect from this and successive Councils is to make the best possible disposition of the \$100,000 now at their command until some of the services inadequately provided for shall become so inefficiently performed, by reason of cramped financial support, that the rate payers will be reconciled to an increase of the amount to ensure their own safety and comfort.

Despite assertions to the contrary, Halifax is one of the lowest taxed cities on this continent. The citizens get more value for their money than in any city I know of, and when reference is made to the annual returns of other cities in Canada and the United States, the truth of these assertions

may be verified. While our rate is $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., most other live cities in Canada are from $1\frac{1}{4}$ to 2 per cent., and in the United States the rates run from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 per cent. Our citizens have no cause to complain of the rate of taxation for civic services proper, and I have no fear of hazarding the assertion that in nine cases out of ten the city taxes are a smaller percentage of the income of the citizens than they were twenty years ago. The difficulties said to exist in paying taxes arise from other causes than an increased rate or alleged depression in business, but this is a social question into which it is not the time nor the place to enter.

Notwithstanding the obstacles surrounding the collection of the civic taxation and water rates, it is safe to say that in few cities is there so little recourse to the sheriff or the bailiff to enforce the payment by any extraordinary means as in Halifax.

Clause 87 of the Assessment Act of 1883 forbidding the payment of the debts of one year from the income of another year and rendering illegal any payment not provided for in the yearly estimates, has brought about slight difficulties and inconveniences in the case of overdrafts. Money to meet these "overdrafts" has been provided by special legislation and their payment made items in subsequent years estimates. In the nature of things, and so long as the estimates for city requirements (passed six months in advance of the commencement of the year) are squeezed within the \$100,000 allowed by law, overdrafts will occur. Under the former system these overdrafts were paid by the Treasury under orders from the City Council, the same as legitimate expenditures, and helped to swell the volume of floating debt. Under the administration of the present law these "overdrafts" have to wait until the necessary legislation is obtained to pay them, and the applications to the Provincial Parliament will, as a matter of course, be made with more or less regularity.

The only method by which these applications can be obviated is to allow the City Council to approach the Governor-in-Council and obtain permission to borrow money and add the amount to the following years taxation—and yet if the obtaining of money to meet “overdraws” becomes easy, will it not offer a premium for extravagant expenditure? So of two evils let us choose the least, even though it be annoying and troublesome to the city authorities and irritating to citizens.

But the citizens who rebel against so-called “borrowing bills” should understand that the bringing of this class of bills before the Legislature for enactment is a vastly better and safer method of treating what is seemingly inevitable, than by paying them quietly, and thus rolling up a floating debt to be met by our successors.

A general balance sheet of the affairs of the Corporation should be made showing its assets and liabilities. Such a statement, though it might involve some trouble and labor, would be of great service in showing our approximate financial position as a corporate body, and would no doubt have a beneficial effect on the credit of the city. As elsewhere stated, the debt of the city is probably covered by assets in real and personal property, permanent improvements, franchises, etc., and these with their estimated values should be plainly stated for the information of the citizens, especially those interested in the financial strength of the Corporation.

Attention is called to the following table of population, taxes, rate of assessment, also of debt and valuation of the leading cities of the United States and Canada. From this table it can be readily seen that Halifax is one of the lowest taxed cities on the continent, has the smallest proportionate public debt and in other respects is favorably placed amongst its contemporaries.

COMPARISONS OF VARIOUS CITIES.

	Population.	Taxes.	Rate.
Boston.....	362,839	\$9,647,811	\$14.60 per \$100
New York.....	1,206,577	29,067,030	20.32 "
Philadelphia...	846,980	10,383,382	18.50 "
Chicago.....	503,304	4,540,506	34.10 "
Baltimore.....	332,190	4,313,960	16.88 "
Cincinnati.....	255,708	3,521,290	20.50 "
Providence....	104,850	1,767,048	14.50 "
Montreal.....	150,000	872,913	12.00 "
Toronto.....	105,211	1,312,985	17.00 "
Quebec.....	50,000	218,000	9.40 "
Hamilton.....	40,000	*360,000	18.50 "
St. John.....	26,127	169,040	12.00 "
Halifax.....	40,000	268,919	12.30 "
Ottawa.....	32,857	"	19.35 "

VALUATIONS AND DEBTS OF CANADIAN CITIES.

	Debt.	Valuation.
Montreal.....	\$11,739,762	\$88,908,728
Toronto.....	6,593,205	73,721,557
Quebec.....	3,079,090	23,250,000
Winnipeg.....	2,098,506	17,371,000
Ottawa.....	2,012,984	11,100,000
Halifax.....	1,680,919	21,211,000
St. John.....	2,811,871	17,978,200
Hamilton.....	.....	19,446,548

THE FUNDED DEBT.

On 1st May, 1881, the City Funded Debt, as shown by the

* Estimated.

Annual Report of 1880-81, exclusive of Water and School Debentures, stood at \$585,253.26, made up as follows :

Building on Market Slip, N. S. Cy..	\$8,000
Sidewalk Debentures.....	48,000
Old Funded Debt.....	24,000
Poor Asylum and Hospital.....	30,000
Lockman Street Extension.....	132,000
Central Engine House.....	11,000

\$253,000 D.C., \$246,253 26

Engine House, Gerrish Street, Dom. Cy.....	12,000 00
Repairs City Property.....	5,000 00
Old Street Loan.....	35,000 00
Fire Alarm Telegraph	8,000 00
Sewerage Loans... :	110,000 00
Extension Queen Street.....	5,000 00
Hospital for Contagious Diseases.....	10,000 00
Public Gardens.....	15,000 00
Poor Asylum and Hospital (additional).....	2,500 00
New Funded Debt.....	44,000 00
Exhibition Buildings	20,000 00
Rockhead Prison.....	36,500 00
Provincial Hospital.....	36,000 00

D.C. \$585,253 26

With the exception of \$68,000 borrowed mainly to replace some sinking funds for the payment of debentures due on the Market House and Market Slip Buildings, it will be seen that the city had value for the above in acknowledged improvements.

In addition to the total above mentioned, the City owed on 1st May, 1881, for Water Supply \$740,973.33, and for

Public Schools \$165,718,63, making the whole liability \$1,491,945.22.

Since 1st May, 1882, the civic debt has been increased as follows :

By Special Act 10th March, 1882, to pay certain obligations to, Comm'rs Public Schools, Board of Public Charities and Halifax Banking Co	\$ 100,000 00
To provide additional buildings on Exhibition grounds	6,000 00
To finish North Common Sewer	12,000 00
To meet deficiencies in collecting City and Water Rates	45,000 00
Fire Engine House at Islesville	2,000 00
To pay an old balance due Comm'rs of Schools.	9,800 00
Improvement of Richmond Park	2,000 00
“ Grand Parade	5,000 00
Fencing Public Gardens	1,500 00
Extension of Water Service	13,000 00
	\$ 196,300 00

Deducting Market Slip debentures paid off and making allowance for some discrepancies in the conversion of a large part of our old funded debt into consolidated stock and Dominion currency, the whole civic debt now stands as follows :

General Civic Debt	\$ 774,227 97
• Debentures for Water Supply	740,973 33
“ Public Schools	165,718 63
	\$ 1,680,919 93

The interest for the above, payable half yearly, is for the

general civic debt, \$41,261.91, and for Water Supply \$43,698.93, but as all recent loans for the Water Department have been included in the City Consolidated Stock the Water Department will be chargeable with the interest on \$33,000 at 5 p. c., or \$1,650 additional, and the general interest account of the city reduced to that extent. The interest payable on School Debentures (\$9,943) is included in their estimate and forms part of their annual claim upon the city. All the school debentures and the greater part of the water debentures bear 6 p. c. interest and cannot be refunded till maturity. When the whole city, water and school debts are consolidated the interest at 5 p. c. should be \$84,000, or \$10,000 less than at present, subject of course to any increase of the debt. As the refunding of the debt and interest have resulted in large premiums it might be advisable to have the Consolidated Act amended to enable the city to borrow at a rate less than 5 p. c., if a lower rate be obtainable.

Out of the whole permanent debt of the city, \$1,680,919.93, \$222,800 represents the funding of floating liabilities, mostly the result of taxes lost for several years previous to 1882. This large amount is in addition to the percentage allowed from year to year, ranging from $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. up to 10 per cent.

By the list of city properties elsewhere it will be noted that the Corporation owns real estate to a considerable extent and value, and though so large a sum as \$222,800 has been added to the funded debt without any asset to represent it, the whole debenture debt of the city may be considered to be more than covered by permanent improvement and by real and personal property.

VALUATIONS.

On page 160 will be found the usual table of valuations of real and personal property dating back to 1850, in which year the total valuation was $10\frac{1}{2}$ millions. From 1862, when the

aggregate was twelve millions, to 1875 when it had risen to twenty millions, there seemed to have been a rapid accumulation of property, or a great enhancement of value in the minds of the owners thereof. From 1874 to 1881 there was just as rapid a decrease, but no one can believe or does believe, that the decrease in the actual value of real and personal property in the City of Halifax was, during those seven years, five and one-half millions of dollars, or from \$20,000,000 to \$14,500,000. Some depression in real estate there was unmistakably, and some reduction in personalty is probable, but the yearly returns of valuations for assessment purposes served only to show that a radical change was necessary in the means and methods of arriving at the value of taxable property within the Corporation limits. The Act of 1883, in sweeping away the system of Ward Assessors, performed one of its best services to the public. Since 1882 the valuations have risen, until in 1884 it was, including Banks, &c., about twenty-one and one-half millions, while in 1885, despite some decrease in personalty, the total was \$21,211,000. While some citizens may have the impression that the valuations placed on their properties are higher than they consider equitable, they must remember that the whole city is valued on a general scale, and a reduction in one property would involve a corresponding reduction in all, so that so long as the city requires a certain amount of money for its expenditures, no change in general valuations can affect the amount levied. A low valuation makes a high percentage rate and vice versa. The Court of Appeal is open to each individual citizen who considers himself over assessed, and the decisions of this Court have given every satisfaction to those who are content with receiving simple justice. If citizens who consider themselves over assessed do not avail themselves of their right of appeal, the fault is their own; if those who do appeal do not obtain the reductions they ask for, it should convince them that they are, in the judgment of three Assessors and of the three members of the Appeal Court, fairly assessed as compared with other citizens.

The theory of Halifax City assessment is, taxation of real estate (subject to exemptions) at its actual value, taxation of visible personalty (also subject to exemption) as far as it is seen, and of invisible personalty so far as the assessors can surmise, at their value, supplementing the surmises by such outside information as can be obtained. Banks are assessed on real estate as private citizens and in addition they are charged $\frac{3}{4}$ of one per cent. on paid up capital, minus assessed value of real estate. Fire and marine insurance companies, associations and agencies pay on real estate and personal property as citizens, and in addition pay a license fee of \$200 each. Life insurance companies the same as fire and marine insurance companies, but with a license fee of \$50. Other companies by Act of 1883 paid the city rate on real estate and personalty, and a license fee of \$100, but last session of the Legislature an amendment was introduced and carried limiting the aggregate tax of general companies to one per cent. of their paid up capital.

If all the personalty that now escapes taxation was found, and with the long list of exemptions as per section 18 of the Act of 1883 (which is almost a literal copy of a similar clause in the old Act) placed on the assessors' books, the valuation of real and personal property in the city would be increased by at least twenty-five per cent. In some cities the exemptions have become so burdensome by reason of throwing heavy rates on the general body of citizens, that a clamorous demand is being raised for the abolition of all exemptions. The general body of taxpayers in Halifax now pay, in addition to their own taxes, those of the Imperial, Dominion and Local Governments, and contribute to the general fund the taxes of the churches, charitable institutions and various other public bodies. And yet, he would be a bold man who would propose to place those interests on the tax books of the city.

Under the law which allows assessment on properties for school rates to be levied for the benefit of the locality in

which the owner resides, much injustice is done to the city of Halifax. The amounts obtained from citizens for taxes on real estate in districts outside the city is not worth collecting, the county valuations being so low; while the tax would be a help to the poor district in which the real estate is situated. On the other hand Dartmouth obtains quite a large sum from school rates from the property of Dartmouth residents doing business in Halifax. In all cases where the high proportionate valuations of the city are made to rate with the low county valuations, the metropolis is compelled to pay greatly in excess of its fair proportion.

It is the opinion of the Board of Assessors that the present amount of valuation of real estate can be maintained unless some great disturbing cause should operate. The Court of Appeal has by its decisions made a fair medium value which is accepted as a standard rating. The valuation of personalty should increase, as new discoveries of taxable personals are made from year to year.

In the affidavit which reads: "Goods, wares, and merchandise within the ward" might, with advantage to the assessment books, read, "within the city," as such a process as moving goods, etc., from one ward to another and back again after the visit of the assessors is not unknown. Goods in bond are assessed at the value, less duty, the same classes of goods out of bond are assessed, duty paid, which is an inequality. There is a difficulty in getting at the owners of shipping, and in consequence very much of this class of personalty escapes taxation. These things show the difficulties in the way of a fair valuation of personal property.

Taking everything into consideration the present mode of valuations under the new law is working satisfactorily. Real estate owners are almost universally adopting the system in vogue elsewhere of renting houses at fixed rates, which include city taxes, and thus disputes between landlord and tenant are avoided.

BOARD OF CITY WORKS.

The Board of City Works was created by Act of Parliament in 1872. It consists of six Aldermen, one from each ward, elects its own chairman and is remunerated to the extent of \$1000 per annum. It superseded the Commissioners of Water Supply, the Committee of Streets, the Internal Health Committee and the Committee of City Property. The water works and everything connected therewith (except collection of revenue), making and repairing of streets, sewers, &c., cleaning, watering, sweeping streets, the keeping, control and management of City Property, Health Inspection, &c., are all controlled by the Board of City Works. The operations of the Board are carried on through the City Engineer, the Clerk of Works, and a staff of foremen and clerks. Weekly meetings of the Board are held for general direction and revision. Though the Board determines most of the mechanical works of the city, contracts must be signed by the Mayor and pass under the city seal. System and general good management characterize the work of this very important civic department. Unlike some other Commissions, the operations of this Board are subject to confirmation by the City Council, and all important matters are brought before the Mayor and Council for ratification.

CITY PROPERTY.

In connection with the Board of Works, a committee of which has control of City Property, it is suggested that a proper register of all the real estate owned by the city, with full details of the same, should be compiled, the properties surveyed and mapped and definite details placed on record. Much valuable real estate, especially waterside properties, have been lost through neglect, and some parcels are now in jeopardy. A thorough revision of the list of properties should at once be made, and at least once a year a regular "stock

"taking" agreed upon. Acquisitions of land for street purposes should be regularly deeded to the city and the recorded in the Crown Land Office. This is an important subject and the attention of the Board of City Works called to it.

WATER WORKS.

Forty years ago the Halifax Water Company was formed. In September, 1848, the citizens began to enjoy the blessing of a bountiful supply of water. At that date the population of the city was estimated at from 22,000 to 24,000. A 12 inch pipe was first laid from the Long and Chain Lakes, discharging about 750,000 gallons of water per day. A second pipe of 15 inches diameter was laid down in 1856, and the supply rose to $1\frac{1}{4}$ millions of gallons per diem. Water takers were from the outset very lavish, in fact prodigal in the use of the water, in consequence of which there was little or no pressure in the more elevated parts of the city, and the fire hydrants were almost useless. Extensive fires in 1859, 1860 and 1861, in the centre blocks of the city, during which the hydrants were found to be totally inefficient, quickened the purchase by the city of the water works from the company at a cost of £56,000, Nova Scotia currency. A Board of three Water Commissioners was formed and the whole system became remodelled. A 24 inch pipe was laid in 1862 and is still in use, delivering about $5\frac{1}{2}$ millions of gallons daily into the city. Subsequently the Spruce Hill Lakes were brought into the water system, forming the High Service, which consists of $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles of 20 inch piping, and over 5 miles of 15 inch pipe in a direct line from the lakes. This High Service is the mainstay of the Fire Department, as well as the domestic supply of the highest streets of the city, also the daily delivery of the High Service, so that the whole daily supply is about seven millions of gallons, giving an assumed average of over 170 gallons per day to every man, woman and child in the city.

The total cost of the works to date is \$750,000, the actual value upwards of \$1,000,000, based upon the income of \$65,000, which could be easily increased to \$75,000, and then be one of the cheapest supplies in the world.

There are between 55 and 60 miles of piping laid in the streets, and there are 327 fire hydrants attached. The number of water takers is unknown, as the rates are largely assessed to landlords, but it is probable that 80 per cent. of the population are totally dependent on the city water for their daily wants. At this estimate the daily delivery of water is about 220 gallons per head per diem, a rate attained by few cities in Europe or America. This should certainly be considered, even by the most extravagant, an extremely abundant supply.

No machinery is used for forcing the water into the city, gravitation alone being the propelling power. The pressure at the fire hydrants varies from 15 lbs. to 60 lbs. to the square inch. A system of concentration is operated at fires, by which means the pressure is largely increased in the district threatened. This is the more necessary, to counteract in some measure, the enormous waste of water in winter when thousands of taps running all over the city to prevent freezing, affect seriously the pressure for fire purposes.

Respecting the revenue, a maximum sum of \$65,000 is fixed as the annual income to pay maintenance and interest on debentures. Special rates are charged to the Imperial, Dominion and local authorities, also to breweries, distilleries, factories, foundries, hotels, saloons, etc., according to estimate of quantities used. Fixed rates are imposed on water closets, urinals, hydrants, fountains, jets; also on horses, cows and other animals. The aggregate of these "specials" is deducted from the estimated revenue required, and the balance is levied by an equal dollar rate on all real estate within the water limits in the following proportion, on $\frac{5}{8}$ p. c. of balance as a fire protection and pipe rate on all lands and premises, $\frac{3}{8}$ p. c. of balance on dwellings as a domestic rate, no dwelling

to be assessed at less than \$4. Distinct dwellings are to be valued at less than \$900 for protection and domestic purposes, nor higher than \$5,000 for domestic purposes. Landlords can, by fying a notice to the Board of City Water, have the water assessed on their yearly tenants and lessees, and in this case the tenants or lessees are liable for the rate. Each tenant to be rated must have a separate pipe. All rates assessed to landlords are secured by a lien on real estate. The following are the valuations for 1885-'86, under which the present year's water rates are being levied and collected:

VALUATIONS FOR WATER ASSESSMENT.

	Pipe Rate.	Domestic.	Total.
Ward 1.....	\$ 3,372,200	\$ 2,575,150	\$ 5,947,350
" 2.....	2,052,850	901,200	2,954,050
" 3.....	2,791,280	526,080	3,317,360
" 4.....	1,546,000	149,900	1,695,900
" 5.....	3,608,300	2,220,550	5,828,850
" 6.....	1,022,800	700,300	1,723,100
	<u>\$14,393,430</u>	<u>\$ 7,073,180</u>	<u>\$21,466,610</u>
Buildings beyond fire hydrants			500,000
Total valuation.....			<u>\$21,966,610</u>

EXPENDITURE.

Water expenditure for interest on debentures.....	\$ 45,349
" " " maintenance	15,000
	<u>\$ 60,349</u>

INCOME.

Extra rates	\$14,000
Army and Navy.....	6,000
$\frac{5}{8}$ p. c. on \$14,000,000 pipe rate	25,200
$\frac{3}{8}$ p. c. on \$7,000,000 domestic rate.....	15,400
	<u>\$ 60,600</u>
Surplus	<u>\$ 251</u>

While the whole of the works may be considered in an effective condition, at times there are complaints from some sections of the city of a limited supply of water. And as before noted the labors of the firemen are greatly increased by a "weak head" at the hydrants. As the quantity of water delivered in the city daily, is not less than seven millions of gallons, giving over 200 gallons per head, or counting an average of six persons to a house, 1200 gallons per household, it will be patent to the most casual observer that there is an enormous waste going on in thousands of houses. The short supply is wholly caused as before stated by the prodigality of water takers, who, fearing the freezing of their pipes in winter, allow them to run in many cases full force, thus reducing, in some instances totally cutting off the supply of other citizens, causing these latter great inconvenience, besides being a constant source of worry to the Engineer and staff of the Water Department, who are blamed. Not long ago 800 outside taps were found going full speed. Even in summer the pressure is greatly lessened by hundreds of defective water closets, broken pipes, disordered taps, etc. No supply, however great, can stand this waste, and for many years the City Engineer has reiterated warnings to the citizens of the danger of this prodigality, but all to no purpose. Various schemes have been proposed to check waste of water, but the only effectual way to stop it is a system of rigid inspection and the enforcement of penalties. Location of taps and pipes in exposed places should be forbidden and a total change made in the protection of water pipes in winter.

The annual reports of the City Engineer on the water supply are exceedingly interesting and valuable. They give detailed accounts of the works, their defects and requirements. Among the suggestions made from time to time and which have not been adopted, the following would seem to be imperatively necessary:

1. The shores around the lakes to be cleaned of all and rubbish yearly, thereby ensuring purer water. beds in two or three localities for the same purpose.
2. Continuance of cleaning out the water pipes by use of mechanical scrapers, and which have been so successfully operated in the past. Such continued cleaning will largely increase the delivery of water and be a great aid to the Department.
3. Improvements in the low service supply by either drawing the water direct from Long lake, or diverting the post road, skirting the shores of the Chain lakes, raising them and thus converting them into deep reservoirs with a view to increasing their capacity and purifying the water.
4. Stringent measures to be taken to stop the waste going on in thousands of houses, stables, shops, factories, &c., throughout the city.

STREETS.

About ninety miles of streets, roads and lanes upon the peninsula of Halifax are under the care and control of the Board of City Works. As the total sum in the estimates this year for "streets, labor and material" is only \$17,000, or an average of but \$190 per mile, the wonder is that our streets are generally in such a fair condition. In 1873-4 the estimate for streets was \$28,000, the following year showed that not only was that amount drawn, but there was an overdraw of \$12,564, part of which was chargeable to the previous year, making upwards of \$36,000 expended for this service in 1873. Ten years ago the Board of City Works reported that it was useless to think of keeping the streets in repair with less than \$30,000 per annum, and a law is now on the statute book enacting that \$25,000 per annum must be expended on the city streets, but as the Legislature which passed the law for the outlay of that fixed sum, failed to show where the addi-

tional money was to come from; the law, like some similar ones, has been quietly and of necessity ignored. During the real estate "boom" of fifteen or twenty years ago, a number of fields on the outskirts of the city were cut up into building lots, and streets were laid out to suit speculators. Many of those streets began and ended no-where. Many of them made no connections with existing streets, and some of them were mere lanes or alleys. Houses were built in out-of-the-way localities, away from water, sewers and street lights. The owners of these properties soon clamored for improved streets, paved gutters, sidewalks, sewers, oil or gas lamps, and in due time obtained these improvements, the cost of which reduced the appropriations for the older sections of the city. If the Board of Works had the generous sum of \$36,000, as was expended in 1873, these distant localities could obtain what they need, but with less than half the sum extreme economy has to be exercised.

For some years past the City Council has set its face against opening any more new streets, except under special circumstances, wisely considering that the care and ordering of 90 miles of roadway is as much as the city can afford. Despite the limited grants of money from year to year the roadbeds of our streets are gradually improving. From 30,000 to 50,000 bushels of macadam are annually spread over the street surfaces, gradually hardening and permanently bettering the roadway. No attempt has yet been made at paving any portion of our streets, owing probably to the fears of excessive first cost, which would no doubt be considerable. It would be advantageous to transport, if a portion of Water Street, say from the Market Wharf to North Street Depot, over which passes the heaviest traffic of the city, was paved with granite blocks. The work once done would last for generations. Some of the hills might be paved with cobble stones which make an enduring roadway.

The City Council ought seriously to consider the present

mode of expending the street monies, viz., by wards. On several occasions the present system has been challenged, but action has been from time to time deferred. For a few years, as an experiment, the whole street work might be left to the control of the City Engineer, and there is little doubt the result of the trial will be satisfactory. Repairs could be effected when needed, and streets prevented from getting into disrepair. Within the past year or two street work has been commenced earlier than usual, which is an improvement. In former years, owing to the disarrangement of the finances, and to the late collection of taxes, rendering payment of labor difficult for want of ready money, street operations were deferred till such a late period, that the autumnal rains washed away the earth and gravel, leaving the stones lying loose on the roadway. Even an earlier commencement of work, than at present, might be beneficial as the repairs would be more thoroughly and effectively done, and the citizens enabled to enjoy the advantages of the improvements during the whole summer and autumn.

On looking through the Board of Works reports for several years it can be noted that many important recommendations respecting the streets have been adopted and carried out, while several equally valuable suggestions have yet to be acted on. The proposal that street cleaning work should be done by small gangs of men traversing the wards regularly and making repairs as needed from day to day, is a good one, and merits a trial. A wharf property for the landing and storage of street, water, and sewerage materials, is a great necessity, and has been several times suggested. A large iron roller to be drawn by horses or propelled by steam, to go over the newly macadamized streets would save its cost in a few years.

Many of the sidewalks in the business part of the city want relaying. The surroundings of the Province Building, Post Office, and Government House are very defective, and though

the attention of the Dominion and Local authorities has been called to their condition, only partial repairs have been given. Much of the brick work in Hollis Street, Bedford Row, and Water Street, requires resetting and replacing. Recent layings of asphalt and other patent materials show varying results. Gravelled walks, especially on hill-sides suffer greatly for want of proper conductors to carry off the rain-pour from houses. Some attention to this subject is being shown the present season, and a number of wooden and paved gutters have been laid across sidewalks, making connection between house conductors and street gutters, which is a manifest improvement. An increase in the number of iron gutter plates at street crossings would be a great boon to citizens, especially in winter season.

The ordinance against obstructing sidewalks has been pretty generally enforced, and the streets are now comparatively free, especially at night when the greatest danger of accidents from obstructions exists. The need of restrictions with respect to cellar vaults, hatchways, coal holes, awnings, swinging and protruding signs, outward swinging gates, doors and shutters, has been pointed out time and again by the City Engineer. As the city will certainly be mulcted in damages some day for neglect of enforcement of proper regulations on these important questions, the attention of the City Council is pointedly directed to the subject in connection with the revision of the City Charter now in progress.

As elsewhere suggested fire proof protection is urgently needed for the many valuable street plans in the Engineer's office that are hourly exposed to destruction, and which if destroyed could only be replaced by a very considerable outlay of money and time.

SEWERS.

One of the subjects of paramount importance in a city, is that all filth and all excrements should be at once removed

and disposed of in such a way that they may not become prejudicial to health. As pain to the body is notice that injury of some kind has been inflicted, so as a rule, offences to the nostrils shew that something detrimental to health is in the vicinity. It is well understood that mortality in cities is more largely affected by the drainage system than by any other local improvement, and we have no further to go than to different parts of our own City for evidence of the fact that other things being equal, the well-drained parts of the City are by all odds the most healthy localities. Typhus fever, Diphtheria, and other diseases of like nature are continually hanging over ill-drained neighborhoods, and the mortality of such localities is out of all proportion to the general rate. The ravages of small pox in Montreal, and the awful scourging received by the filthy cities of Spain and France, are warnings to us of the terrible danger of being in a defective sanitary condition from want of a proper system of sewerage.

In 1875 the City Council ordered a complete survey of the existing sewerage system of the city, the result of which was embodied in a report issued in 1876 by the City Engineer, who at the same time formulated a plan for a new system, in conformity to which all subsequent constructions of sewers have been adapted. From this exceedingly valuable report I will quote to shew the condition of our existing sewerage, the change since 1876 not making any appreciable difference in the position:—"The area of the whole city is 4363 acres—that area which will ultimately be drained by the proposed system of sewers is 2236 acres." "There are now known to be 18.66 miles (in 1885, 20 miles,) of public sewers in use, besides a number of stone drains of doubtful utility, which may, or may not, have been constructed at the public expense. Of these 18.66 miles 3.71 miles, are built of brickwork; 10.77 miles are common stone sewers, and 4.16 miles are earthenware pipes. Many of these sewers are wretched constructions, and totally unfitted for the work they are supposed to do, causing endless trouble and expense in cleaning, continu-

ally choking up, and frequently flooding the cellars in the vicinity." "In carrying out the proposed system it will be necessary to abandon 6.44 miles of the existing sewers, the remaining 12.44 miles may, I think to a large extent, be utilized. Probably some of the latter on being opened and examined will be found unsuitable to be retained." "As a rule the ordinary stone box drain or sewer, as here constructed, should be abolished, the only places where they can safely be allowed being where they exist in a soil not already or likely to be excrement sodden, or soaked with sewage matter, where they are of sufficient capacity and depth, and where they have a constant and sufficient flow through them to be clear of deposits." From another report of Mr. Keating's I quote:—"Our present sewerage system, or more properly our want of system, is an evil of the most abominable and alarming description. Annually thousands of dollars have been squandered in building and tinkering with things known here by the name of sewers. Most of them are stone boxes of the roughest description, laid at absurd levels and in extraordinary places. Many are not two feet below the surface. They are to be found anywhere and everywhere but where they ought to be. The usual positions for them are under gutters, curbing, sidewalks, foundations, walls and buildings themselves. When wanted no one knows where they are, unless occasionally some old inhabitant. Catch pits are discharged directly into them, and street gratings have been placed over them, and so sand, gravel, filth, and rubbish of all kinds are daily washed into these contrivances specially adapted to receive and retain accumulations. Some have been laid upon a dead level, and these, as well as many others, are filled with mud and filth, which in all probability had lain there for years." "During late years large sized earthenware pipes have been introduced to some extent. Besides being expensive they are not suited for sewerage purposes here, as they are very liable to breakage. Brick sewers of equal area can be constructed at less cost, as has been clearly

proved by tenders recently received on both plans, and there can be no question on the superiority of brick work as regards strength." "Old fashioned and open privies, poisoning earth, air and water, still prevail among us to an alarming extent, wells also exist, and some people are so obstinate to persist in their use even after there is every reason to believe them contaminated, and when a comparatively pure supply of corporation water is at hand."

The foregoing extracts will no doubt be a surprise to many of our citizens who fancy that because Halifax is situated on a hill the drainage is perfect, and that the sewers are clean and pure because flushed by the occasional rain showers which flow through them to the harbor. Before our sewerage system can be considered moderately satisfactory a radical change must be made, and large outlays of money devoted to this most important improvement. In the scheme formulated in 1876 the city was divided into eleven sewerage districts, each distinct and separate, most of them discharging into the harbor, the sewers to be ventilated by man holes in the centre of the streets. About one-half of the sewers projected on the plan and situated in the thickly peopled parts of the city were considered urgent, the remainder being in the suburbs and mostly on streets with few houses, can be left until the population increases. While the bulk of the proposed new sewers are to be of the size of 18x12, there being some 54,100 feet of that size out of a total of 95,000 feet, the sizes increase to a maximum of 48x36. The total probable cost of the whole urgent work when finished will be \$389,000, of which the frontage rate will contribute \$165,000, leaving \$224,000 to be provided by the city. This is the system which is now being worked out in the construction of new sewers. Since 1876 all the sewers and parts of sewers built have been in conformity to the general plan. But at the rate at which the change is being effected it will take over twenty years to complete the whole urgent plan, by which time the deferred system for the suburbs, costing \$360,000, less

\$156,250 frontage rates, will need to be undertaken. That portion of the city funded debt represented by sewerage works is \$110,000, and by the acts of 1885, chapter 46, the city is empowered to borrow \$10,000 annually for five consecutive years, to be expended in the construction of sewers, in accordance with the sewerage scheme of 1876. Part of this money has been borrowed, and two or three sections of sewers are in course of construction.

While the slow laborious process of providing what is an almost entirely new system of sewerage is going on, the City Board of Works is keeping the ill effects of the old sewers down to a minimum by flushing with lake water, by extra cleaning at catch pits and gratings, and by a liberal use of chloride of lime, carbolic acid, &c.

SANITARY.

Under the Sanitary arrangements now in force the Health Inspectors are under the control of the Board of City Works. The employment of the Deputy Marshal of Police as "Health Inspector," and of the Police Sergeants as "Deputy Health Inspectors," could not for various reasons be effectively worked. Two Inspectors are now in the field, combining the duties of water and sanitary inspection, and a great improvement in the condition of the city is already manifest. All complaints of nuisances on being reported at the office of the Board of City Works receive immediate attention. The Inspectors visit from house to house, and in addition to abating or removing nuisances, they are endeavoring to educate the poorer classes into habits of cleanliness about their persons, houses and surroundings. During the year past quite a number of meetings of the Board of Health and Sanitary Committee have been held, and there is a quickened interest in the subject of sanitation. A code of sanitary rules is being drawn up. Some 5000 copies of a pamphlet, prepared by the City Medical Officer, on sanitary and preventive measures, have

been distributed by the Inspectors. This pamphlet treats of the symptoms of such diseases as small-pox, diphtheria, scarlet fever, measles, etc., and gives directions for treatment. Its circulation will aid greatly in the preservation of the public health, and will enlist the interests and sympathies of the citizens in the great social subjects of cleanliness, sobriety and temperance.

Every case of diphtheria reported received immediate attention from the Medical Officer, who has had the patients sent to hospital and the houses in which they lived closed up or disinfected. In conjunction with the Health Officer of the port several cases of small-pox on steamers have had the requisite attention, and special arrangements were made to prevent contagion, at the same time not interfering too greatly with the discharge of freight. Street cleaning has been attended to with regularity. As usual, ashes, rubbish and vegetable refuse have been removed every week during the summer and autumn seasons. A general vaccination of the citizens has been requested by the City Council in view of the epidemic of small-pox in Montreal, and should this disease make its appearance in the city every means at the disposal of the authorities will be used to stamp it out.

By the published mortuary returns of various cities in Canada it will be seen that Halifax occupies a foremost place.* Few sta-

*The following are the figures of the eight leading cities of Canada for the year ending 31st December, 1884:

Montreal,	5022	ratio of deaths to 1000.....	33.05
Toronto,	1982	" " "	20.30
Quebec,	1686	" " "	26.63
Hamilton,	769	" " "	19.66
Halifax,	799	" " "	20.92
Ottawa,	678	" " "	23.11
St. John,	616	" " "	22.29
Winnipeg,	469	" " "	20.78

tions of the British Army and Navy shew such favorable vital statistics as our own city. While there is very much cause for congratulation and thankfulness in this respect, there are some features of domestic life in Halifax to be deplored. Visitors of charitable societies, and of the volunteer aid fund, report that the dwellings of very many of the poor are really unfit for human habitation. It is stated by those who are cognisant of the facts, that hundreds of hovels in courts, lanes and backyards, which are scarcely fit to house cattle, are rented by poor and hard-working people at rates proportionately higher than houses on some of our best streets. There are good laws on the statute book to meet those cases and an effort will be made to have them carried out. If the various sanitary regulations of the city were enforced and the citizens generally would conform to them, Halifax would be the healthiest city on the globe, as Providence has signally favored us with a magnificent site, a splendid climate, and an abundance of good wholesome water.

STREET LIGHTING.

The streets of Halifax are lighted by 342 gas lamps and 119 oil lamps, a total of 460 lights. In addition to these, there are a number of electric lights outside mercantile establishments lighted during a portion of each night. The cost of gas lamps on city account is \$8184, and of oil lighting \$1600. For several nights each month the moon is depended on to provide the necessary light, but it frequently happens that in stormy weather dense darkness prevails. Arrangements should be made to the effect that the street lamps should be lighted when the moon is obscured. This could easily be done by notice from the Board of Works office an hour or two before nightfall. By the introduction of the electric light an opportunity of testing the capabilities of this kind of street lighting has been availed of by the City Council and a contract entered into with the Halifax Electric Light Company to

provide 38 lamps at a cost of \$100 per lamp. This change supersedes 159 gas and oil lamps which now cost \$3801.25. The street lamps will not be removed even where superseded by the electric light, so that should the city need to fall back on the gas lights they will be available at an hour's notice. An agreement to this effect has been made with the Gas Light Company, the city paying \$1.75 per annum for each unused gas lamp.

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.

Halifax is old fashioned enough to prefer her extremely effective Fire Department composed of volunteers, to a paid department as now exists in most other cities. So long as such splendid bodies of men as those forming the Union Engine Company, Union Protection Company and Union Axe and Ladder Company are ready and willing at a moment's notice to combat the devouring element, the citizens of Halifax should feel profoundly grateful to these faithful and brave men for their self denying and arduous services for the common good. To do justice to the Union Engine Company, their apparatus should be kept in a perfectly efficient state, and be in a position to be moved rapidly to every fire. For a year or two past the horses hired to convey the engines and ladder waggons to fires, have not been located in the houses, but on the expiry of contracts this year, the Board of Firewardens, in conjunction with the City Board of Works, have purchased horses and stable them in the several engine houses, where they are trained to duty and are ready at a moment's notice.

Steam Fire Engines 1 and 2, have recently been thoroughly overhauled and fitted with new steel boilers. No. 3 is now in the repair shops also receiving a new steel boiler and other renewals, and she will be ready before winter to take her station. On more than one occasion within the past two or three years, there has been but one steam engine to be depended on, the others breaking down under pressure, but the Depart-

ment will now for the first time in several years, have three steamers in first-class order and ready for any emergency that may arise. The Board of Fire Wardens would feel safer if they had one more powerful steam engine than those now in use, and located within striking distance of the valuable blocks below Barrington Street, in ward 3 and 4. Not one winter passes without the necessity of such an addition to the fire apparatus being apparent, and the department is anxiously looking forward to the time when the City Council will provide the needful to make the purchase. Three ordinary steamers with one first-class engine in reserve, are not too many for a wooden city like Halifax, extending over so large an area, and containing in its business streets so much valuable property fixed and moveable.

There is a fair supply of hose on hand, viz.: 5400 feet of rubber hose, and 2000 feet cotton hose, in all 7400 feet, a good proportion of it quite new. Another 1000 feet would about fill the hose reels and give a change of dry hose, should a second fire occur within twelve hours, or before the wet hose could be dried or thawed out.

A chemical engine and a number of Babcock's extinguishers would form valuable additions to the fire equipment, and be very serviceable for small fires in dwellings, stores and warehouses, and especially in hardware and dry goods shops, where water is often more destructive than fire. On several occasions within the past five years, such appliances would have saved enormous sums of money to owners of property and underwriters.

Of fire hydrants there are: high service hydrants, 98; low service, 199; private hydrants on wharves, 30,—in all 327, which number might advantageously be increased, and will no doubt be, as extensions of water are granted to new localities.

An immense amount of moveable property and not infre-

quently human lives are saved annually by the labors of the Union Protection Company, which is an effective salvage corps in every sense of the word. Much more could be saved if this very efficient and useful company had a larger number of rubber covers and other saving appliances. Insurance Companies should see that the deficiencies in the salvage apparatus of the Union Protection Company are supplied. And as speed is a great requisite, each salvage wagon should have its horse or horses, not only for the first rush to a fire, but for subsequent removals of property saved. A moveable fire escape would also be a valuable adjunct to the fire apparatus of this efficient and indispensable arm of the fire department. The occurrences of the Poor Asylum and Queen Building fires, as well as those at other fires of more remote dates, demonstrate the need of some mechanical apparatus for aiding in the saving of life.

A great improvement in the effectiveness of the Hook and Ladder Department is to be noticed; this branch of the Fire Brigade having made great strides during three or four past years. Still further effectiveness would follow the procuring of a second Bangor Extension Ladder, and a good supply of small serviceable hand-ladders with improved fastenings. The members of the Union Axe Company deserve every encouragement for their arduous labors in the Fire Department.

The manager and operator of the fire alarm telegraph reports the wires and boxes in good working order. Since the whole time of the manager has been given to the care of the lines and connections, alarms are regularly and perfectly given. All breaks and defects are instantly detected and rectified.

Under a recent Act of the Legislature a Board of Fire Escapes has been formed and is now at work preparing a scheme to be carried into operation without delay. With

such recent examples of losses of life at fires, as have been already referred to, no time should be lost in compelling the erection of permanent escapes on dangerous buildings, in which human life is in continual jeopardy, and also providing movable escapes or apparatus suitable for facilitating exit from buildings that may not be fitted with permanent fire escapes.

Losses by fire last year were very small, nearly all of the estimated loss during the year, viz., \$80,000, was at the Acadian Hotel fire. There were 54 alarms struck during the year, or 22 less than the previous year. This betokens a remarkable immunity from serious fires and losses thereby. It is a good testimony to the effectiveness of the Halifax Fire Department that so many incipient conflagrations were extinguished before gaining any headway. Should this record be kept up it must have a beneficial effect in lowering insurance rates.

No progress has been made towards storage of petroleum in isolated buildings. Though an earnest attempt has been made to compel dealers to provide a suitable place of deposit, the provisions of the laws on the subject have not been carried out. Another attempt will be made to enforce the law.

The Provincial enactment on the storage of gunpowder in shops and warehouses has been pressed upon hardware merchants who are the almost exclusive sellers of this article, and they are gradually but slowly conforming to the law.

I would call attention to the mode of ringing church bells, especially on Sundays. Should a fire alarm be struck during the time occupied in calling worshippers to their several churches, serious consequences, through delay, might and will some day certainly ensue. A representation of this danger made to the several church authorities or a city ordinance should be resorted to.

The warmest thanks of the corporation are due to the

chairman and members of the Board of Firewaders and to the officers and members of the several companies comprising the Fire Brigade for their efficiency and their devotion to what is an arduous, self-denying and dangerous public duty.

A grand Firemen's Tournament will be held in this city next year, and it will be for the citizens to repay the labors of the firemen in the past by encouragement and sympathy, as well as by tangible assistance in getting up and carrying on the tournament, which will bring many visitors into the city from the United States and from all parts of the Dominion of Canada.

THE POLICE FORCE.

Ten years ago the Halifax Police Force consisted of 1 Marshal, 2 Deputy Marshals, 6 Sergeants, 40 Constables. Total, 49.

In 1885 it stands thus:—1 Marshal, 2 Deputy Marshals, 1 Detective, 6 Sergeants, 32 Constables. Total, 42.

With a larger population there is a smaller force, and still the work is fairly well done. Police court records shew a diminution of serious crimes, not only during the past year, but there has been a steady decrease going on since 1879, which improvement is in a great measure due to the increasing efficiency of the police department. The total number of cases brought before the Stipendiary Magistrate during the past seven years are as follows:—

1879.	1880.	1881.	1882.	1883.	1884.	1885.
2158.	2054.	1883.	1878.	1876.	1330.	1491.

I must bear testimony to the general good conduct of the members of the force during my first term of office, as I have had only two or three occasions in which to reprove or re-monstrate. The value of the City Marshal to the City as head of the force has been so frequently borne testimony to that I cannot add to his well-earned laurels, but I am bound

to say that on all occasions I have found him vigilant, pains-taking and thoroughly conscientious in the performance of his duty. The Deputy Marshals and the Detective officer have conducted themselves to my complete satisfaction, the sergeants are zealous in looking after their divisions, and as a rule the constables are attentive to their duties.

Cases sometimes occur when members of the police force so misconduct themselves as to necessitate infliction of penalties, but these cases on the Halifax Force are rare, and when they have occurred the Committee has dealt wisely and firmly with them.

While regular monthly inspections of the force have not been held, occasional parades were required, at which the men appeared neat and tidy, and were addressed on their duties by the Mayor and members of the Police Committee. These occasional inspections, accompanied by words of warning and encouragement, have been productive of good results.

Section 157 of the City Charter says: "After the passing of this Act, no person or persons shall be appointed or chosen, or *continued* by the City Council to the office and duties of police constable or constables, for the City of Halifax, who shall be over the age of sixty years." There are several men now on the force who are over sixty years of age, and the City Council should make other provision for these men as vacancies on other services occur, and so conform to the law. These men have all served long and faithfully, and are entitled to civic employ in other branches where the duties are not so exacting or burdensome.

It would add to the good behaviour and effectiveness of the members of the force if a small extra gratuity, and a good conduct badge were given to such men as have served over ten years with clear records.

The Police Station is a disgrace to the City of Halifax, it

is a perfect pest hole, saturated with sewage, ill ventilated and unhealthy in the extreme. No improvement, at any reasonable outlay of money, is possible in the basement of the City Building, and other quarters must be provided. In event of any epidemic disease breaking out in the City, no one could remain for an hour in the Police Station without great danger. There should be a lock-up at the south extremity of the city, and another at the north end, in which to confine prisoners, so as to avoid the disgraceful scenes of dragging drunken persons, especially women, through miles of streets to the central station; also to avoid the long absence of policemen from their beats. A police patrol waggon, which could be used in scouring the suburbs and bringing in prisoners from the extremities, would be a valuable addition to the efficiency of the department. This waggon could also be used to transmit assistance rapidly from the central station to any part of the city.

On several occasions I have instructed the City Marshal to employ counsel to attend at the police court, to assist in prosecutions for violation of city laws and ordinances, as it was useless urging vigilance on the part of the police force unless those summoned for breaking the laws were followed up. Few convictions would be obtained if violators of the municipal laws were not sharply looked after by a prosecuting attorney. Fines collected in consequence of the employment of counsel on the part of the city, far more than paid the prosecuting attorney's fees.

Citizens should understand that the police are not ubiquitous. The number of men on duty at any given time is limited and it is quite impossible for policemen to be just where they are wanted at all hours of the day and night. If those who need the protection of the police, would take a little trouble in giving information of breaches of law, and would perform the duties incumbent on all good citizens, open crime would be reduced to very small dimensions. The freedom of Halifax

from anything approaching organized rowdyism, is due, not so much to the power of the authorities exercised through the police force, as to the fact that the great mass of our population is law abiding and peaceable.

THE CITY PRISON.

Reference to the City estimates for several years past will shew a gradual decrease in expenditure for Rockhead prison. It is quite a safe statement to make, that this is the only City department which shews a decreased outlay while being kept in an efficient condition. There may be several minor causes contributing to this result, but the main cause is the fact that the Governor conducts the prison on proper business principles. In consequence of the strictness of discipline, and the tasks required from the prisoners sent up for restraint and punishment, the number of habitual frequenters has been largely reduced. Many idle and vicious vagabonds looked upon the City prison as a home during the winter, but under the present management these individuals prefer to look elsewhere.

The following table will shew the principal features of change in the City Prison during the past five years:—

	Estimated Cost.	Earnings.	Male Prisoners.	Female Prisoners.	Cost of Males.	Cost of Females.
1881	\$ 7878	\$ 3100	\$ 282	\$ 99	\$ 70 82	\$ 47 45
1882	7000	3540	270	111	70 82	46 55
1883	6400	3500	194	92	60 35	46 45
1884	5200	5265	233	127	56 70	42 80
1885	4600	3775	172	82	56 70	42 80

These figures tell their own story, and comment on them is quite unnecessary. A juvenile reformatory in connection with the prison, has been a great want; for at times there have been from ten to fifteen boys, at ages ranging from eight to fifteen years, incarcerated, with no means of employing them, save in the stone shed—their terms of imprisonment

being too short to teach them trades, even if there were facilities for so doing. The foundation of the proposed Roman Catholic reformatory, which will carry on a similar good work to that performed in the Protestant Industrial School, will relieve the prison of youthful delinquents, and by teaching trades and by educating them, will enable them to grow up useful members of the community.

Every year great improvements are being effected on the farm, so that what was formerly a barren, rocky, sterile tract of waste land, has now by incessant labor been cleared and brought under cultivation, and made to supply a large portion of the vegetables used in the prison, materially reducing the cost of maintenance. Some arrangements might be made by which a good deal of the worthless land in the vicinity of the prison could be similarly treated by prison labor, and in time add greatly to the value and appearance of that part of the peninsula.

The prison proper and outbuildings need repairs; a supply of water is a prime requisite for domestic use, washing and fire protection, but though these needs have been pointed out year after year, no money can be spared from other city services for such purposes. A bill to enable the city to borrow money for repairs and water supply was defeated in the Legislative Council last winter.

Stone breaking in winter, and the clearing of land in summer, form the greater part of the labor of the male prisoners; the female prisoners are engaged in house work, spinning, knitting, hair picking, making and repairing of clothing, etc. To the credit of our mechanical classes be it said, that the presence of a mechanic as a prisoner is so infrequent, that most of the skilled labor required in the prison has to be paid for.

It is only simple justice to state that the administration of the affairs of the prison is highly satisfactory, and the service of the Governor and matron are greatly valued.

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PARKS AND GARDENS.

Halifax is well provided with parks, gardens, squares, plots, and vacant spaces of every kind; in fact few cities on this continent are so well off in this respect. In addition to open spaces owned or occupied by the corporation, the extensive properties of the Imperial Government, most of which are accessible to the citizens, give plenty of breathing space to our people and would form breaks in event of any large conflagration in the city.

POINT PLEASANT PARK,

the most extensive of the pleasure grounds, comprising 186 acres in extent, is under the management and control of a Board of Commissioners composed of the mayor, six aldermen and six citizen commissioners. The Park is held under a lease of 999 years from the Imperial Government at a nominal yearly rental. There are nearly six miles of carriage drives in perfect order, besides some miles of foot-paths winding all over the Park. On the west it is bounded by the beautiful waters of the North-West Arm, and on the east by the harbor of Halifax. Point Pleasant, the extreme south boundary, faces the mouth of the harbor, having the Atlantic ocean in full view. Nature has been prodigal in endowing this beautiful park with many spots of extreme loveliness and although art has done but little to improve on nature, the blending of the work of both has resulted in giving to our city what few small communities possess. Two years ago a legacy of \$5,000 bequeathed by the late Wm. P. West to be used for some purpose in improving the Park, was appropriated to the erection of two iron summer-houses or pavillions, which greatly add to the beauty of the localities where they are placed, besides affording shade and rest to those who frequent these delightful spots. Sir William Young, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, has for years kindly superintended the work of keeping in order and improving the drives, foot-paths,

groves, etc., and the present creditable condition of the Park is largely owing to his supervision and care. When South Park St. (which is now in process of extension), is opened into the Park it is the intention of Sir William Young to cause to be erected a handsome pair of iron gates at this the main entrance. The only risk of permanent injury to the Park is from fires, which are sometimes thoughtlessly lighted by boys, and which might during a high wind completely destroy the trees. To avoid this, the operations of labor this year have been to remove the thick masses of underbrush which has largely reduced the risk of fire. The total annual cost to the city of keeping up this really beautiful park is \$1,000 per annum, of which the ranger receives \$300, the balance being expended in planting trees, removing underbrush and keeping the drives and paths in order.

THE PUBLIC GARDENS.

The fame of the Halifax Public Gardens has spread far and wide. No outlay of city money gives so much enjoyment and gratification to the citizens as the comparatively small amount of \$2,000 per annum allowed in the estimates towards keeping up these gardens. No matter what opinion strangers visiting Halifax form, and give expression to, concerning other features of our city, there is a universal consensus of favorable comment on the Public Gardens. Year by year improvements are effected in the laying out and ornamentation of various parts of the grounds until perfection seems not far off. The recent visit of the Superintendent, Mr. Richard Power, to Britain and the continent, has resulted in the reproduction of some magnificent horticultural effects. During the late summer and early autumn the presence of the military bands adds greatly to the charm and pleasures of an afternoon in the gardens. More visitors are attracted to Halifax by the fame of this truly enchanting spot than any other attraction our city affords. A Board of Commissioners similar to that of the Park control the business management, and the gentle-

men forming this Board give a large amount of time and care to the work, especially to the financial arrangements, it being incumbent on them to provide, in addition to the city grant, sufficient from evening concerts, exhibitions of fireworks and various rentals to keep the gardens in their present condition and to effect improvements. Too much cannot be said in praise of Mr. Power, the Superintendent, who has for a number of years devoted his best energies to the care and beautifying of the Garden and Common.

THE COMMON

This spacious area originally consisted of 235 acres, but it has been curtailed by separating the grounds of the Provincial and City Hospital, the Exhibition grounds, School for the Blind, Public Gardens, Camp Hill Cemetery, and other enclosures, so that not more than one-half remains unenclosed. The military exercising ground and the unenclosed spaces to the south of Cogswell Street, used as recreation grounds, have had great improvements effected in the drainage. The enclosed field north of Sackville Street has been filled in, levelled and will be planted next year. In time this field will probably form part of the Public Gardens. Camp Hill, the greater part of which is military property, is rough and wild, and is at present torn up by military operations in building mock batteries, digging trenches, etc. This prominent part of the Common is an eye-sore and an offence. The field opposite the Exhibition Building is in great need of attention from the Commissioners, as the fencing is not equal to those surrounding the Exhibition grounds, Hospital, Public Gardens, or Blind Institution.

THE GRAND PARADE.

For almost a generation this prominent square, in the very heart of the city, has been a public nuisance. Litigation over the ownership caused its total neglect. Its walls became crumbling ruins, its surface was little better than a dump for

rubbish. Common sense at length prevailed, and a complete transformation is in process. A very substantial granite enclosure, surmounted by a heavy iron ballustrade, has been erected, and next year the surface will be levelled and laid out into walks and flower-beds, so that what was for a series of years a source of shame to the citizens will be a handsome square. The improvements which will when completed cost \$13,000 are partially met by Miss Cogswell's bequest of \$4000, kindly paid by Dr. Charles Cogswell, and the city pays the balance.

OTHER PARKS AND GROUNDS.

At the corner of Grafton Street and Spring Garden Road an unsightly and dangerous stone wall enclosing the old poor house burying ground has been removed and a neat post and chain fence substituted. This spot is shaded by quite a number of fine trees, walks have been made through it, seats provided, and various improvements effected. The shade of the trees in the heat of summer is greatly enjoyed by the hundreds of citizens who daily cross this miniature park. It is satisfactory to know that the opening and improvement of this pretty spot was effected without cost to the city treasury. The same process could be effected at the old Dutch church burying ground on Brunswick Street.

MULGRAVE PARK, &C.

Part of what was called the Governor's farm, at Richmond, was fenced and improved last year at a cost of \$2000. It enclosed a fine growth of beech trees. There is also a band stand and a number of seats provided.

The esplanade at Freshwater has also been improved recently, and provided with a band stand and settees.

A tidying-up is visible in the Provincial Building square, and other enclosures, shewing evidences of an improved taste in such matters.

On the whole, we have no reason to be ashamed of our public parks and gardens.

Of late years great interest has been taken in tree planting—not only in country places, but in cities. In many cities and towns, Arbour day is an annual holiday. If such streets as Tower Road, Spring Garden Road, South Park Street, Pleasant, Gottingen, Brunswick, Cogswell, Cunard, and the multitude of streets north and south, were lined with trees their whole length, instead of being only partially planted, it would add greatly to the beauty of the city and suburbs.

CITIZEN'S FREE LIBRARY.

Few cities with any pretensions to literary culture or intellectual attainments now exist without having well equipped libraries for the public use, and it is gratifying to know that Halifax is not the exception. In the Legislative Library there is available for the members of Legislature, Government officials, and a number of citizens, a large collection of valuable books, and the libraries of the Young Men's Christian Association and kindred societies, furnish reading matter to the membership of these several institutions.

In the Citizen's Free Library, Halifax has the nucleus of a good collection of books; but for some years, owing to a lack of interest on the part of the public, as well as a lack of monetary support from the City Council, this library has been going behind. The report of the librarian tells its own story.

A short history of the rise and progress of this Library may not be uninteresting, and may serve a good purpose in stirring up a feeling of local pride in the public mind, which, it is to be hoped, will result in something being done to re-invigorate and revive the management of this most valuable institution:

Between 50 and 60 years ago, the late John Naylor, druggist, and Hugh Blackader, publisher of the *Acadian Recorder*, with other public spirited citizens, formed a Joint Stock

Library Association, or Company, gathering together a limited number of books which were shelved in a back-room or office on Granville street, but were subsequently removed to Sackville street, below Hollis. Some years after this the library was extended, and called the Mechanics' Library. Its place of abode was then opposite the old Grammar School on Sackville street, where it lingered out a fitful existence and died. Subsequently the books were purchased by the Hon. William Young and presented to the City Council, on condition that they should be formed into a Citizen's Free Library, put into a suitable place, and kept open for the use of the public. For a time a room in the City Building was used as a library and two city officials acted as librarians, but this arrangement did not work successfully, and after a brief closing Mr. Creed, the present incumbent, was appointed permanent librarian, and it was reorganized, extended and improved. In 1873, a removal was effected to more commodious quarters on Barrington street, and additions being made to the volumes, a great impetus was given to the issues, necessitating additional assistance to the librarian. The "Halifax Library," a large private collection, was, in 1875, purchased by the City Council for \$1020, and combined with the Citizen's Free Library.

Valuable donations of books and money were made from time to time by Sir William Young and other gentlemen, and more extended premises became necessary. On 7th of October 1878, the library which had been previously removed to its present location in Argyle Hall was formally opened, and the issues of books at once largely increased, there being for a few years from 30,000 to 40,000 issues per annum. For the past two or three years the applications for books have rapidly declined, owing to the fact that no additions of modern books to speak of have been made. The publisher of the Sea Side library has kindly made donations, and several volumes of the Franklyn Square library have been presented by the late Chief Justice. No other of our citizens has done anything to assist in keeping up the supply of modern reading matter.

The amount placed in the city estimates for the support of the Library, and which sum is fixed by law, viz: \$1200 per annum is totally insufficient for the purpose. This small sum is supposed to pay the Librarian and his assistants, rent of hall, caretaker, fuel, gas, binding and repairs of books, purchase of magazines, &c. So it is no wonder the Library is in constant financial straits. Mr. Creed states in his report that the expenditure is annually \$300 beyond the income. No less than 1500 of the most readable books are laid aside for repairs, and as a small sum, say six cents a volume, will put them in order and enable them to be re-issued, some means should be adopted to raise the small amount necessary to do the work.

The closing of the library is not to be thought of for a moment, so a combined effort on the part of some public-spirited citizens should be put forth to place it on a better foundation, to provide some modern literature, and to render it more worthy of the city of Halifax.

REVISION OF THE CITY CHARTER.

In the last estimates the sum of one thousand dollars was inserted for the purpose of paying Revisers of the City Charter and though Commissioners have been appointed for that purpose and have entered upon their duties, have revised the laws and have had the result of their labors printed and placed upon the table of the City Council, but little progress has been made with the amendments necessary to give cohesion and completeness to the code. The compilation of City Laws and ordinances now in use, was made in 1876, when a committee of the City Council, Aldermen Thompson and Power, did the work. Attempts had been made by the City Council of the day, looking towards a thorough revision, but no satisfactory progress could be effected, and the movement broke down. The committee to whom the work was assigned was instructed "to publish the 'Laws and Ordinances' in such form as to enable the citizens without serious trouble or inconvenience to learn how they are governed."

Though the committee did their work faithfully and well, the compilation was unsatisfactory; it has however been made to serve the ends aimed at, but not without trouble and inconvenience. Since 1876 the intervening period has been fruitful of Legislation on civic affairs, and so much has been enacted, so much repealed, so many additions and alterations made, that the present book of Laws and Ordinances is almost entirely useless. The whole civic system in matters of Finance, duties of officers, Public Schools, Assessment, Elections, Streets, Sewers, Water Works, Licenses, Poor, Hospitals, power of City Council, and various other subjects, has been radically changed, many of the By-Laws and Ordinances have become obsolete and many new ones have been passed. The following is a list of city acts passed through the Legislature since 1876.

- 1877—Issue of City Prison debentures.
- " Payments of debts of city library, and provisions for maintenance.
- " Issue of new hospital debentures.
- " Loan of \$24,000 to pay old floating debts.
- " Annual assessment of \$2,000 for public gardens.
- " Borrowing \$40,000 for sewerage purposes.
- " Establishment of a high school.
- 1878—Act for building Exhibition hall.
- " Amendment of Public Gardens Act, 1877.
- " " Sewerage Act, 1877.
- " Relating to unsafe and dangerous buildings.
- 1879—Amendment of the Building Act.
- " Assessment to defray entertainment Marquis of Lorne.
- " " to pay exhibition losses.
- " Street damages appraisalment.
- 1880—Record of ordinances and general warrant of distraint.
- " Taxation of banks.
- " Consolidated Fund Act—tenure of office—publication of defaulters' list—who ineligible by reason of non-payment of rates.

- 1881—Nomination and election mayor and aldermen.
- " Exhibition sheds loan.
 - " Dry Dock Act.
 - " Appropriation of land for railway purposes.
 - " Regulation poors' asylum and hospital.
 - " Vesting county court house in commissioners.
- 1882—Amending charter—Provisions for borrowing to meet losses.
- " Election of mayor and aldermen, and sundry amendments to charter.
 - " Act to complete north common sewer.
- 1883—Assessment Act of 1883, containing numerous alterations in sundry laws, &c., &c.
- " Sundry loans—Industrial School, &c.
 - " Payment of School Board.
 - " Settlement of Grand Parade dispute.
- 1884—Act for sundry loans, &c., &c.
- " Amendment of School Act.
 - " Railway Siding Act.
- 1885—Amendments relating to payment of rates and taxes
- Court of Appeal—Register of Real Estate—Assessment of public companies.
 - " Reducing salary of City Treasurer.
 - " City prison loan.
 - " Grand Parade loan.
 - " Sewerage loan.
 - " Change in sinking fund.
 - " Payment of sundry accounts.
 - " New Water Assessment Act.
 - " Cotton Factory subsidy.
 - " High School amendments.
 - " Fire Escape Act.

This list does not, by any means, embrace all the laws relating to the City of Halifax, for there have been a number of acts and by-laws passed in addition to the foregoing, which more or less affect civic legislation.

A complete and thorough revision of our city laws and ordinances is a subject of paramount necessity, and cannot longer be delayed without great danger to city interests. Unless a vigorous, determined and continuous effort be made this autumn and coming winter, the necessary amendments cannot be effected in time to secure legislation from the coming session of the legislature.

It is not unlikely the present attempt at revision by means of discussion in Council, will have the same result as that of 1875. A motion is now on the order of the day to hand over the completion of the revision to a committee of aldermen, to which motion the earnest attention of the City Council is invited.

Since the foregoing was penned, the whole revision has been handed to a committee of seven aldermen, with his honor the recorder.

Growing out of this subject is the duty of having the various laws and ordinances of the city enforced. Violators of laws who are summoned to answer at the city police court naturally avail themselves of the best legal talent they can procure, with the too frequent result of being freed from the penalties provided by law. The City Recorder has not hitherto considered it to be his duty to appear in the police court, and for want of a public prosecutor many guilty persons have escaped. In special cases provision has been made for having the authorities represented in the court and with good results, but it will be well for the City Council when revising the charter to provide that their laws and ordinances shall be duly prosecuted before the court by the City Recorder as prosecuting officer.

In getting the Legislative sanction to varied changes in the laws and ordinances, some latitude should be provided for in the case of new enactments, which might with advantage be left to the City Council. Of late the Legislature has been too

much given to interference with city affairs, and the corporation has become almost hide-bound by reason of repressive legislation in matters which should be controlled by the city authorities..

When civic legislation is before the House of Assembly and Legislative Council too much deference is paid to views of individual citizens who appear before these bodies in opposition to changes in civic administration, which the experience of the City Council find to be necessary.

THE CITY BUILDING.

While the County Council of Halifax meets in a handsome new building mostly paid for by city money, the City Council and its officials occupy a building which is a standing disgrace to the corporation. In this building, stowed away in obscure corners, are to be found (after a diligent search) the various city officials, occupying contracted, low-ceilinged, unventilated rooms, without conveniences of any kind. The police headquarters is a perfect pest hole, and it is no wonder the men on duty prefer the sidewalk outside the station, unless driven within doors by stormy weather. In a small office, about ten feet square, the onerous and exceedingly important duties of the City Clerk, who is the pivot of the civic system, are carried on amid interferences and interruptions which render a satisfactory discharge of his duties an impossibility. If the mayor or aldermen have business with the City Clerk, and which happens every hour of the day, they have to transact it in the face of a squad of prisoners (brought before the Stipendiary Magistrate who also uses the office) or perhaps an insolvent debtor or two, with the usual attendance of squabbling attorneys, and noisy witnesses. On the same floor is the City Court room, grim, dirty and generally run down, in two little dens off the Court room are the private offices of the Stipendiary and the Assistant City Clerk. The office of the Mayor, into which mayors, aldermen and officials of other

cities, also distinguished visitors from abroad, frequently visit, is not creditable to the city, and gives a very unfavorable impression of the status and dignity of the Chief Magistrate of the Metropolis of Nova Scotia. The offices occupied by the Auditor, City Medical Officer, City Marshal, and Clerk of License are scarcely on a par with that of the City Clerk, while the other officials are not much better off. Contrasted with the neat and handsome Council room of the County Municipality the City Council Chamber suffers greatly. There is a lack of ordinary conveniences all over the building, and its insanitary condition is notorious. The officers of the corporation are frequently rendered unfit for work by reason of pestilential odors and bad ventilation.

THE PUBLIC RECORDS.

With the exception of two medium-sized safes of doubtful fire-resisting qualities there is no place of safety for the accumulations of public books and papers which are of the utmost value, but which a fire would completely destroy. Suppose the assessment books in the collector's office would be destroyed by fire, or the valuation books in the assessor's office, or the civic records in the city clerk's office, or the accounts and vouchers of the auditor, or the cash books, ledgers and registration books in the treasurer's office. No power on earth, nor any amount of labor, could replace the information, which would in the event of a fire in the building be totally lost. It is safe to say, that no Banking, Commercial or business concern would have its books and records in such danger as are those of the corporation, every day and hour.

The building was condemned as untenable ten years ago, and it is far more unfit for habitation now than it was in 1875. No expenditure of money will make it fit for corporation purposes, and the Board of Works has persistently refused to waste any more of the public funds on it. A proper City Hall is the only remedy, and should be provided without delay.

There is legislation in existence to enable the city to expend \$100,000 in the erection of a city building suitable for the various corporation services, but a much less sum will provide all that is necessary.

No city in Canada has such a shabby apology for a corporation headquarters, even small cities like St. John and Charlottetown being far ahead of us in this respect.

CAMP HILL CEMETERY, ETC.

Reference is made to Camp Hill Cemetery, in this report, for the express purpose of bringing to the notice of the City Council that the number of available burial lots is rapidly decreasing, and the time is fast approaching when it will be necessary to seek out a new resting place for the Protestant dead.

From the dimensions of this city of the dead, those who selected such a limited area for a burial place had little idea of the growth of population, for it never could have been anticipated that in little over a generation a cemetery should be opened and closed for want of space for interments.

There are vacant fields to the west of the present cemetery which might be obtained at a reasonable valuation. It might be better, in view of the mistakes made in locating our present cemeteries so near the centre of the city to locate further out, say on the banks of the North-West Arm, or between the head of the Arm and Bedford Basin, where there are hundreds of acres suitable for the purpose.

Reference to the report of the committee will shew the work done and the improvements effected, with the cost of the same.

Notwithstanding that much attention is given by the curator, and though considerable money has been expended by the committee, the cemetery suffers in appearance from the num-

ber of neglected lots. Railings and headstones, in too many cases, are allowed to fall into disrepair, burial plots have become overgrown with weeds and grasses, and have an untidy and forsaken look. A step only from our beautiful Public Gardens, the contrast is certainly not to the advantage of the Cemetery as a whole, though a large portion of it receives that attention which betokens affectionate remembrance of departed relatives and friends. Lot-holders, perhaps, do not understand that the public money of the city cannot be taken to improve the cemetery, or the lots therein; these latter are the property of the holders, and it is the duty of the owners to keep them in order.

The other Cemeteries where interments take place are the Cemetery of the Holy Cross in which members of the Roman Catholic communion are buried, Fort Massey Cemetery where deceased officers and soldiers of the army and seamen of the navy are interred, and the Cemetery at the Three-mile house. The Cemetery of the Holy Cross is fast filling up and in a few years it will be necessary to open a new Catholic Cemetery elsewhere. As in other cities, a large joint Cemetery might be purchased, each religious body having its subdivisions which could be consecrated according to its own rules. In less than ten years the opening of new Cemeteries will be imperative. Now while land is low in price would seem to be the proper time to make the provisions for the future.

Since the opening of Camp Hill Cemetery on 17th August, 1844, to 31st August, 1885, the number of interments have been 11,264. The number of unsold lots is about 700. On 1st December, 1880, there were 979 lots unsold, so that the average sale of lots have been about 60 per annum, at which rate less than 12 years, probably less than 10 years, will exhaust the available space.

RELATIONS TO THE SCHOOL BOARD.

About one-fourth of the annual taxation of Halifax is for educational purposes. To a considerable number, perhaps to a majority of the citizens, the public schools represent a direct financial gain. To a large class of persons who have children in the public schools, the school tax is a very much smaller sum than a fair rate for even a common school education, in fact many citizens pay less for their whole "city, county and school taxes" than the education of their children would cost at schools equalling those in operation in our city. Yet it is not uncommon to hear complaints of the expenditure of so much money on our schools, from at least a few tax payers who are really only contributing one quarter or one half the actual cost of educating their own children. Many of our largest contributors to the city treasury, and consequently to the school rates, derive only indirect benefits or advantages from the public schools. Quite a number of our mercantile firms, the members of which have no children to educate or who are educating children at private schools and colleges, actually pay in taxes the salaries of from one to two teachers, yet there are fewer complaints from these individuals about the school rates than from some who are getting far more in value from the schools than they pay towards their support.

Seeing that so large a portion of the annual taxation is expended on our City Schools, I may be pardoned for taking a little time in looking into the affairs of this most important branch of the public service.

The Board of School Commissioners for the City of Halifax, is composed of twelve members, six appointed by the City Council and six by the Provincial Government. Each commissioner holds office for three years, four retiring each year. Aldermen Commissioners, do not of necessity vacate their positions on the Board, when they leave the City Council. By law the control and management of the public schools in

the City of Halifax, (which is a school section) is vested in this Board of Commissioners.

On demand of the Commissioners, the amount of the school estimates for the year is included in the assessment of the city. Though the amount fixed per annum is \$60,000, that sum can be, and is, exceeded simply by obtaining the consent of the Governor-in-Council. Under the law, Halifax City obtains the taxes on property, lying in the county, owned by citizens, while Dartmouth and other school sections obtain the school tax on property within the city, owned by persons residing in the county. The low valuation of property in the county, compared with the high proportionate city valuations operates against the city school revenue. The School Board can buy sites, build school houses and issue debentures to pay for the same subject to the approval of the Governor-in-Council. Debentures issued by the Board of School Commissioners are a charge on the City of Halifax, and form part of the city debt.

From the last published report of the Commissioners, it is seen that the public schools of the city consist of the High School (or County Academy) and 20 common schools, with 102 teachers. The highest salary is paid to the head master of the High School, who receives \$1600; 73 teachers receive \$400 and upwards. For the term ending 30th October, 1884, there were 121 pupils in the High School, 55 being honor scholars and 66 paying pupils. On the common school rolls were 5,828 pupils, with an average daily attendance of 3,872, the per centage of attendance being 71. The number of pupils on the rolls has grown from 2,670 in 1866 to 5,828 in 1884, or an increase of 120 per cent. in 18 years. But while the average daily attendance in 1866 was 1,780 out of 2,670, or 66 per cent., and in 1875, 3,871 out of 5,175, or 75 per cent., that of 1884 was only 3,539 out of 5,828 enrolled, or 60.73 per cent. The foregoing figures are copied from the report of the Board of Commissioners.

The highest expenditure for school purposes was \$78,081 in 1878; the lowest within ten years was \$63,979 in 1883. The average cost per pupil in 1878 was \$14.79; in 1884, \$11.86.

Eight school-houses are owned by the Board, six others are occupied without rent, and sixteen are rented at a cost of \$4,263 per annum. For the current year the total estimated cost of the city schools is \$79,400, with deductions of \$9,500 for the Provincial Grant and \$2,200 revenue from the High School and Charity Board, leaving the amount of \$67,700 to be assessed on the citizens, or a fraction over one-fourth of the whole city taxes. On 31st October last, the school debentures afloat amounted to \$165,718.67, all at 6 per cent. interest.

The supervisor reports the work of the common schools to be fairly well done. Pupils of both sexes are now taught in the High school. It is satisfactory to know that the commissioners can report progress from year to year, and that the results attained in the city of Halifax schools compare favorably with those of other cities in Canada and the United States. The commissioners, I am satisfied, do their work faithfully, and the officials of the board realize the responsibilities of their positions.

With respect to the teachers, the supervisor states: "nine teachers out of every ten are working in all earnestness and honesty to secure the greatest possible progress of their pupils in the greatest number of the subjects embraced in the course of study. Of the remaining one in ten, it must be said that their duties are performed in a more or less perfunctory manner." In other words, there are from ten to twelve teachers in our public schools who should not be there. As the city is directly interested in the progress of free school education in the province, it may be noted that the number of pupils registered has increased from 71,059 in 1866 to 101,069 in 1884. The proportion of the entire population at school during some part of the year is 1 in 4.3 as compared with 1 in 4.4

in 1883. Cumberland, Digby, Hants, Kings, Yarmouth show an average of 1 in 3.9; Lunenburg, and Shelburne 1 in 4; Annapolis, Colchester, Inverness 1 in 4.1; Cape Breton, Pictou and Queens 1 in 4.3; Antigonish, Guysboro 1 in 4.4; Victoria, 1 in 4.6; Halifax county 1 in 4.9; Richmond 1 in 4.9; Halifax city 1 in 6.2 the lowest of all, which is not creditable to the metropolis, and should hasten the operation of the compulsory school attendance act.

Salaries of Halifax City school teachers give the highest averages of any part of the Province, 1st class male teachers receiving an average of \$723; 1st class female teachers \$431. Male 2nd class receive \$425; female, \$300. The general Provincial averages are male 1st class \$423.10; 2nd class, \$287.04; 3rd class, \$212.13. Female Provincial averages are respectively \$311.28, \$235.51, \$169.08. From these rates it will be seen that the salaries of Halifax teachers are in some cases double the Provincial averages, and in every case more than one-half above them.

Halifax City has the largest number of pupils to each teacher, viz., 60; Yarmouth, 59; Digby, 58; Cape Breton, 57; Lunenburg, 55; King's, 53; Colchester, 52; Cumberland, 51; Annapolis, Guysboro', Halifax, Hants, Pictou, and Shelburne 50; Antigonish, 49; Queen's, 43; Richmond, 42; Inverness, 37; Victoria, 33.

In all these figures are subjects for thought and reflection, and on the whole there is not a little to be thankful for in the progress of our city schools. The Superintendent of Education, in reporting on the city schools, says: "In these (reports) will be found gratifying evidence of the intelligent activity with which the affairs of our Metropolitan schools are being conducted."

On 1st November the Halifax High School will become a County Academy.

RELATIONS TO BOARD OF PUBLIC CHARITIES.

This year the Board of Public Charities calls on the city for \$22,000 for the Poor Asylum and the Provincial and City Hospital. Through the county they also draw some \$13,000 from the city for insane patients in Mount Hope. Paupers in the Poor Asylum are paid for at so much per head for each city pauper, the cost being ascertained quarterly and charged pro rata. The cost of patients in the Hospital is met by the Provincial and City Treasuries at the rates of $\frac{2}{3}$ and $\frac{1}{3}$ respectively. Inmates of Mount Hope Hospital for the Insane are charged to the county at a fixed rate per annum for board, \$130 for males and \$104 for females, with extra charges for clothing worn or destroyed.

The composition of the Board of Charities is the Commissioner of Works and Mines, Chairman, the Mayor of Halifax, Vice-Chairman, and three other Commissioners appointed by the Provincial Government. The three Commissioners are the actual managers, they taking the various institutions monthly by rotation. A large portion of the supplies furnished to these institutions is by patronage of the Commissioners. Groceries, medicines, meat, and fodder for cattle are supplied, by tender and contract. Dry goods, clothing, crockeryware, boots and shoes, tinware, hardware, paints, oils, etc., etc., are purchased under the directions of the Commissioner for the month.

Of the City funded debt \$68,000 represent the supposed part ownership of the City of Halifax, in the Poor Asylum and the P. & C. Hospital, but the city has to pay the whole interest on this amount, whereas a portion should equitably be met by the Board of Charities. As the buildings are now vested in the Board of Charities, or in other words the Province of Nova Scotia having taken the buildings out of the control of the city authorities, it would only be fair for

the Province to assume the debt of \$68,000 or at least pay the interest on this sum. If this was done a considerable saving to the city exchequer would be effected.

A rigid scrutiny on the part of the city authorities, of every person sent to the Hospital for the Insane, and the Poor Asylum, on account of the city, should be regularly carried out, to see that none but those having legal settlement in Halifax are charged against the city. And as before shewn, the greater portion of the increased taxation of late years, comes from the enlarged expenditures of those public institutions, so the City Council should exercise a closer supervision over them, and take a more intelligent interest in their financial affairs.

Owing to recent difficulties between the Board of Charities and the late Medical Board of the Provincial and City Hospital, some new legislation will likely be effected, and in event of any radical changes in the management of the institutions controlled by the Board, or of the Board itself, the city should be a party to any material alteration.

RELATIONS TO THE COUNTY OF HALIFAX.

The financial relations between the city and the county have been for many years extremely unsatisfactory. Before the formation of the municipality of Halifax county, the city was largely indebted to the county, and the first financial statement made to the county council to the close of 1879 showed an alleged balance of \$20433 due by the city, Dartmouth owing \$15818. But the same statement showed that if Halifax and Dartmouth paid their indebtedness, the county would have had a surplus of \$17288 in the county treasury.

In 1881, the city balance had grown to \$27981, the Dartmouth balance to \$19094, while the county surplus increased to \$13304. On 1st January, 1882, the finance committee of the county council reported the debt due by the city to be \$43086.

For some time the city had collected the county assessment rates, and had not paid them over to the county treasurer, using them for city purposes. In fact, the city was floated along on county, city, school and provincial monies, without the use of which, the city treasurer would have been obliged to allow the interest coupons and other pressing obligations to go to default, and the city would have been compelled to stop payments. During 1882 the county received from the city treasurer \$43405 mostly proceeds of a loan raised partly by an issue of debentures and partly by borrowing from the bank. But notwithstanding this large payment, at the close of 1883 the city was brought in debt \$20910, while payments to the extent of \$18450 were made that year. The sums credited to the city in 1884 are \$19517, but despite this the county committee on finance brings in the city an increased debtor for alleged arrears of \$25482. To sum up we have the following:—

Paid the county treasurer in 1882.....	\$43405
“ “ “ 1883.....	18450
“ “ “ 1884.....	19517
“ “ “ 1885.....	25482
Alleged arrears	
Total.....	\$106,854

Under the Assessment Act of 1883 the City Treasurer is bound to pay weekly to the county the proportion received by the city collector for county rates. Though the city was compelled to pay every dollar of the indebtedness claimed Dartmouth has so far successfully resisted payment of its debt to the county. If the suit of the County of Halifax against Dartmouth were successful the County Treasury would have a surplus of nearly \$20,000, and the city should be relieved to almost that extent. But as Dartmouth claims to have an equitable defence, and in the late statements the County Finance Committee has omitted the claims from the list of assets the city has a slim chance of any relief from that source.

It is the opinion of some who are qualified to speak intelligently on the subject, that the city rate-payers have contributed a good many thousand dollars more than their fair share of county expenditure.

By the Provincial Acts of 1885, Chapter 28, the collection of debts due the Board of Public Charities by the several municipalities throughout the Province, is facilitated, and under this Act the County of Halifax is supposed to demand the amount alleged to be due by the city in five annual instalments with interest. If the City Council is satisfied that the amount is correct this will add about \$6,500 to each of the next five years' assessments.

The city valuations have been for several years increasing at a much greater ratio than those of the county, the result of which throws still heavier proportions of county expenditures on the City Treasury.

Since 1881 the increase of county valuations has been only \$51,000 or about $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. while in the same period the city valuation has increased 33 per cent. or over ten times the county proportion. The county valuation is so absurdly low that it is not ten per cent. of the whole. Some fair proportionate mode of valuation should be arrived at which would be just to the city. The county values are merely nominal.

It is probable that a close investigation would shew that at least $\frac{1}{3}$ of the inmates of Mount Hope Asylum charged to Halifax county, are from the county outside the city and of the other $\frac{2}{3}$ not a few are from other counties and places outside the province. Under the present system of city liability to county, and county liability to the Charity Board, the city pays \$13,000 or thereabouts, and the outside districts \$1000. The city should not I think pay over \$6000 or \$7000 while the county should pay from \$4000 to \$5000. A good

many patients have been and are now in the Hospital for the Insane at the public expense, who should be paid for by friends.

The time has arrived when the City of Halifax should be separated from the County of Halifax, but if this cannot be effected the city might keep its own insane patients in Mount Hope, by which change some thousands of dollars will be saved. Some \$30,000 has recently been expended on the county court house, \$20,000 of which is a debenture debt created, the interest of which is paid by the city in the same proportion as other county indebtedness, viz: over 90 per cent. of the whole nett expenditure.

While the City Council and officials are obliged to work in a contracted, unhealthy and badly situated building, a standing disgrace to the corporation, the county council and officials are located in a superior building, with ample accommodation, a beautiful situation and every convenience, nearly all of which has been effected at the cost of the city tax-payers.

THE DRY DOCK.

A continuous agitation for the construction of a Graving Dock has been kept up for over five years, during which period the almost unanimous expression of sentiments on the part of the Chamber of Commerce, the press, and the general public has been in favor of carrying out the provision of the Act of 1881, Chapter 23. This Act authorized the City of Halifax to enter into an agreement with any company with a capital of not less than \$750,000 to construct and operate a Graving or Dry Dock in the City of Halifax, and for the payment to any such company, an annual subsidy not exceeding \$10,000 for a period not exceeding 20 years. The City Council has recently proposed conditional terms to the Halifax Graving Dock Company, organized in London in conformity with the English Joint Stock Companies' Act. The Dominion Government has given a like subsidy for a like time, and it is

expected, in fact promised, that the Imperial Government which had offered a subsidy of £1,000 per annum for 20 years, will join with the Dominion and City and give £2,000 per annum.

It is too soon to speak of this great undertaking as assured but unless something unforeseen interposes the long talked of establishment of a Dry Dock will soon be added to the equipments of the port of Halifax. A careful consideration is asked to the report of the City Engineer on the St. John's, Newfoundland dock, which appears elsewhere in this annual report.

SHORT LINE RAILWAY.

No apology is needed for keeping this subject before the public of Halifax, for Committees of the City Council have for years co-operated with Committees of the Chamber of Commerce in endeavoring to secure a shorter commercial connection with the great western entrepôts of Canadian trade. Experience has proved that the Intercolonial Railway cannot fulfil the promises and hopes of Confederation, and though that great road has done wonders for inter-Canadian trade, it comes far short of expectation as an extension of the Canada Pacific Railway to the Maritime ports. The selection of the southern route by the Dominion Parliament at its last session is believed by some eminent authorities to be a great error, but notwithstanding the choice made it is not at all certain that this route will be adopted. The interests of Halifax as well as of the whole country demand that the "shortest and best" route shall be chosen, and no influence which can be made to operate should be left untried to bring about the desired end. Surveys of the missing links should be carried out to give proper data. Correspondence is still being conducted with influential parties, and an agitation is in progress which it is hoped will not be without its legitimate fruits. The subject of Halifax being one of the outlets for the C. P.

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Railway is a vital one for the commercial and financial interests of our city. Mr. Keating's report and letter on this subject will be found elsewhere.

IN GENERAL.

There are other subjects of interest in connection with city affairs, to which special reference should be made, but as this review has already gone beyond reasonable limits, I will content myself with hurriedly mentioning them.

LIQUOR LICENSES.

The laws regulating the issue of licenses for the sale of intoxicating liquors are not in a satisfactory state. During a portion of the year, there was a conflict between Municipal, Provincial and Dominion Laws, and after causing no end of trouble, the latter are at present in a state of suspension, pending an appeal to the Privy Council as to their legality. In the meantime the city license laws are being carried out, there being nearly 200 licenses so far issued this year. An agitation is now going on with the view of adopting the Scott Act in Halifax. Seeing that the future of this branch of the civic revenue is in such an uncertain condition, I will reserve remarks on the defects of the present city laws till another occasion.

GREEN MARKET.

While there are several markets for country produce in various parts of the city, a suitable green market is greatly needed for the near-by country people who come to the city on Wednesdays and Saturdays, with their small garden and barn yard stuff for sale. The present mode of occupying the roadways and sidewalks of two or three public thoroughfares, is an interruption to the business and traffic of the streets around the Custom House and Post Office. Besides this, it is pitiful on stormy days to see so many country people, especially women

and children, exposed to rain and tempest without shelter of any kind. If the Imperial authorities could be induced to exchange the fuel yard for some other city property, this market difficulty would be in a fair way for solution.

THE FISH MARKET.

The fish market which was in years gone by, one of the institutions of Halifax has sadly deteriorated of late, the trade having spread over several localities along the water side, and in some branches, notably that of salmon and shad, may be found, contrary to strict interpretation of law, all over the city. Licensed fish dealers complain that grocers are allowed to sell salmon without taking out licenses. It is not generally known that fishermen can occupy stalls in the fish market on payment of a small fee. They are not allowed to sell from boat or barrow. The ordinances regulating sale of fresh fish, need revision and modifying, as street hawking which is forbidden by law, has become a great public convenience.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES, &c.

Officials of the Dominion Government exercise authority and supervision over weights and measures. The law relating to weighing of bread, has been carried out and so far as can be ascertained by occasional visits of the deputy marshal to bakers' shops, good weight is the rule. Measuring of coal, salt and grain, is still carried out by city measurers, whose standards are approved and stamped by the Dominion officials. Some difficulties have arisen between the weighers of flour and several dealers who refuse to pay the city fees, and proceedings are being taken in court by the City Recorder to compel payment.

CATTLE POUNDS.

Complaints are frequently made about cattle and horses being allowed to go at large in the suburban streets, especially

in the south west and north west portions of the city. Besides being a source of danger to children, they destroy young shade trees and do other injury. Proper pounds both north and south are a necessity, and should be provided.

REGISTRATION OF DOGS.

No civic ordinance is so systematically defied as the registration of dogs. Notwithstanding the penalty for keeping unregistered animals, it is probable that not one-fourth of the dogs infesting our streets are registered. There is great difficulty in identifying owners of dogs. Cases of vicious dogs attacking children and grown people occur often enough to call for repression. The present state of the law overridden as it is by Dominion Statutes respecting cruelty to animals, renders the destruction of ownerless and unregistered dogs somewhat difficult.

IMPROVEMENTS OF SURROUNDINGS.

Our city would be greatly improved in appearance if every citizen would take a pride in the surroundings of his dwelling and vicinity. Shabby fences, rickety picketings, broken tree boxes might be fixed up, enclosures open to the street planted with a few flowers and kept clean and tidy. A liberal use of paint, lime and whitewash would effect a revolution, and after a beginning is made by some public-spirited citizen, the desire to improve surroundings would grow. The example of the few would spread to the many, and in a short time a total change in some localities would be manifest. In the centre of the city especially, every citizen is bound to keep the sidewalk clean and free from obstructions. Tufts of grass should be cleared from all paved sidewalks and anything offensive removed. City employees clean the streets from gutter to gutter, let the citizens do the rest and we shall have a cleaner, tidier city.

Any person defacing fences and walls by affixing placards,

bills or posters, without the consent of the owner, is liable to fine and imprisonment. The defacement of fences, &c., in this way should be resisted by property owners as it is a disfigurement and an injury.

DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY.

Parents and school teachers should strive to impress upon children the wickedness of damaging and destroying trees, fences, empty houses, &c. It is discouraging to citizens to have newly painted fences, houses, tree boxes, defaced and destroyed, trees with their branches twisted and cut, windows in vacant houses broken and the interior fittings stolen. These crimes, especially in boys, who are the chief transgressors, are generally the result of parental neglect. If every citizen would consider himself a special policeman to prevent such destruction of property, by ascertaining the authors, and promptly reporting them to the police, the evil would be speedily met and cured.

STREET WALKERS.

Troops of young girls are allowed by parents to roam the streets at all hours of the day and night, and many of them are thus led astray from the paths of virtue. The police have been instructed to report these girls to their parents and have them taken off the streets.

STREET ARABS.

Even more plentiful than the girls, are gangs of boys prowling over the city, many of them perhaps truants from school. The amount of crime among boys of tender age is simply appalling. When the compulsory school act goes into operation it is to be hoped that these "Arabs of the street" will be compelled to spend their time more to the present safety and future advantage of the community than their present occupation promises.

MINORS SMOKING.

The police have orders to prohibit minors smoking in the streets, and any minor found guilty of the breach of this ordinance is liable to be arrested, fined or sent to the county jail. It would be satisfactory to know that this ordinance is carried out.

SABBATH DESECRATION.

Frequent complaints have been made by the Evangelical Alliance and other religious bodies that the Sabbath was continually violated by the opening of small shops in defiance of law, and as the police report that intoxicating liquors are known to be illicitly sold in some of these shops the City Marshal has been directed to notify the shop-keepers that the city laws and ordinances forbid their opening on Sundays. After one or two warnings persons wilfully setting the law at defiance are summoned and fined. Some persons have the only entrance to their houses through their shops, but the law is only carried into operation in well proved cases of Sunday selling.

HACKS AND CABS.

Old established hack and cab owners complain of the excessive number of licenses issued to new comers, and they think in the interests of the citizens the number should be limited. Close supervision should be exercised over all licensed hackmen, so that any who misconduct themselves should be weeded out of the ranks. Special objections are made to the issue of licenses to some persons who have no plant to carry on the business through the year, but who turn out only in the winter, during good sleighing, with a small single sleigh, and thus cut into the fares of regular permanent hackmen who follow their calling the year round. Licensed hackmen should be prohibited from allowing their hacks to be used in taking cases of contagious diseases from houses in the city to the hospital, and should be especially forbidden to turn their hacks into hearses for children's funerals. The proposal of

the Committee on Hacks and Trucks to have a regular plan of stands with settled numbers for hackmen, etc., is a move in the right direction, and will obviate much trouble and remove a source of irritation.

CONCLUSION.

I would consider myself to be derelict in my duty did I not bear testimony to the work of the various religious, benevolent, charitable and temperance societies of our city. I would specially refer to the Protestant and Roman Catholic Orphanages, Halifax Visiting Dispensary, Protestant Industrial School, Roman Catholic Reformatory, St. Paul's Alms House, School for the Blind, Deaf and Dumb Institution, Old Ladies' Home, Infants' Home, Home for Friendless Women, all of which are doing a noble work among the several classes for which they are founded. The thanks of the friends of the poor and destitute are due to the managers and visitors of the Association for Relief of the Poor, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Volunteer Aid Fund, also to the various church organizations, which care for the sick and needy. No less worthy are the aims and operations of the National Societies—the North British, Charitable Irish and St. George's—also the British Veterans' Society. And there are other and similar organizations working among their own members and families who require help and sympathy. Were it not for the systematic and never wearying work of these societies and organizations, the sufferings of the helpless and destitute classes would be appalling, especially during the winter months. The outlay of time and money to carry on the noble work of organized charity is very great, and it is a matter of thankfulness to God that so many devoted men and women have it in their hearts and hands to engage in this the noblest of occupations.

Notwithstanding the world-wide depression, our city is improving and extending, enterprises are multiplying and increasing, the great mass of our citizens are more comfortably off than ever before. As our institutions and enterprises

increase our responsibilities become greater and call for larger sacrifices of time and closer attention on the part of those who devote themselves to the public business and interest.

The age is one of advancement, great industrial enterprises, extensive public works have arisen, and are projected in our midst or in our vicinity, better connections by sea and land with other communities are being agitated for, and it is to be hoped that when the period of almost universal depression passes away Halifax will take a great step forward in the path of material prosperity.

In the meantime it is our duty as guardians and conservators of the public interests to do all that lies in our power to make our city what it should be—as the commercial and financial metropolis of the Maritime Provinces.

As a British community devotedly attached to the great and mighty Empire, of which we form no insignificant a part, our duty should be so to conduct our civic affairs as to be worthy of our connection with the glorious British Empire and its greatest dependency the Dominion of Canada.

In conclusion, I would express my thankfulness to the members of the City Council, who have been so assiduous in their attention to their duties as aldermen, and to their consideration and support to the mayor; also to the city officials for the manner in which they have discharged their duties to the Corporation.

Trusting that the current year will enable us to bring to a successful ending some of the important subjects which have for years been before this and previous councils,

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. C. MACKINTOSH,

Halifax, October, 1885.

Mayor.